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ABSTRACT

This document reports on a study, conducted by the author, which focused on investigating the problems of the way our schools are financed, the arrangements for delivering educational resources to our students, the developing problems of collective negotiations, and the way our school systems are organized and interrelated. The author also examined State funding obligations as they relate to equality of educational opportunity. Based on study findings, the author recommends that the State of Massachusetts (1) redefine school district tasks, removing the more unmanageable ones; (2) mandate staffing levels in order to remove a major manifestation of inequality; (3) adopt Statewide approaches to the determination of appropriate salary levels; and (4) provide more support for district management through policy guidance and through encouragement of voluntary regional associations. Appendixes contain sample study questionnaires and explain the research methodology. A related document is EA 004 756. (JF)

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modernizing school governance for educational equality and diversity

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Director
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FOREWORD

The Legislature has charged the Advisory Council *to recommend such policies as will promote and facilitate coordination, effectiveness and efficiency in the operation of all public education systems in the commonwealth.* The single most important element of our system of education is the governance of our elementary and secondary schools – its quality and effectiveness. As it is of prime importance, so too does it offer the most complex and difficult problem of investigation and analysis. Changes in our society demand changes in the laws and the governance of our schools which developed in a different and simpler time. For nearly three years the Council and its staff in collaboration with committees of the School Committees and Superintendents Associations consulted with each other and with some of the most distinguished scholars and administrators in the Country. Finally we turned for counsel and assistance to Dr. Robert Wood, President of the University of Massachusetts and an outstanding political scientist and public administrator. Dr. Wood assisted us in planning the study, in choosing the study director, Dr. Paul W. Cook of M.I.T., and arranged for the University of Massachusetts to contract for the study.

The original plans for the study called for examination of the roles, organizational relationships and responsibilities of the superintendent of schools and their school boards, examination of the relationship of local districts to the Department of Education and other state agencies effecting education and the examination of appropriate relationships, organization and strategies for statewide organizations involved in public education. As Dr. Cook progressed with his study activities, he became convinced that by far the most important handicaps to effective governance of our schools stem from the system of interrelationships which have been established by the legislature since since the foundation of our public schools in colonial days. His investigations led him to the conclusion that the way our schools are financed, the arrangements for delivering educational resources to our students, the developing problems of collective bargaining negotiations, and the way our school systems are organized and interrelated – that from these four elements derive the

most pressing demands on our school committees and superintendents. Dr. Cook then set about investigating these problems and ways for solving them.

The Advisory Council regrets that it was not possible in this study to cover both the problems which Dr. Cook has investigated and the others causing the overload of stress and work which superintendents and school committees face in coping with their day to day responsibilities. In another study the Council or some other agency must assist government leaders, school committees and superintendents in redefining their roles and requirements for assistance and information in the markedly changing society which they serve. The Council notes that the current study did not utilize all of the funds allotted, some of which were reassigned to another project.

Dr. Cook is right in his identification of the fundamental problems facing those who govern our schools. If sufficient funds and other provisions make possible the equitable delivery of educational resources to all of the children and youth under a system that diminishes the competition between the governments of our cities and towns and our school committees, then those who govern our schools can devote their attentions to basic educational problems and to communicating more effectively with their local constituencies. Dr. Cook's analyses are significant. His recommendations deserve the most careful consideration. The governance of our over-a-billion dollar school system and the resulting quality and nature of our educational programs must be of the highest order of priority. After all, it is the quality of our people and their productivity that makes for a good life for them and for a productive, prosperous Massachusetts. Education is a principal tool of society to increase the quality of the people.

On behalf of the Advisory Council on Education I extend our gratitude particularly to Mr. Hugh Boyd, President of the Massachusetts School Committees Association, and Dr. John Connor, Superintendent of Schools in Worcester, and Chairman of Ad Hoc Committee for Revision of Structure of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent's Association, who led their respective committees in all of our planning efforts and finally in

participating in the study. We extend our gratitude to Dr. Wood, President of the Univeristy of Massachusetts, for assisting us in planning the study, getting it underway and making available the facilities of the University of Massachusetts. We also express appreciation to those who served on the study committee and to the many others who made themselves and their resources available to Dr. Cook and his staff. On behalf of the Council I transmit this report on the governance of our schools to the Governor, the members of the legislature, those who govern our schools and our cities and towns and all thoughtful citizens, I urge them to read Dr. Cook's analyses and recommendations and then to associate themselves in developing the important steps which will lead to a more efficient, more equitable and more economical school system.

William C. Gaige

August 15, 1972

FOREWORD

Paul Cook's thesis may challenge public educators in Massachusetts today, but it should comfort them as well. For the propositions he puts forward and the evidence he assembles in support, offer them – and us – the reassurance that the problems of governance faced by our public schools can still be solved by mortal men. The State's cities and towns do not necessarily need new school committees, nor do those school committees necessarily need new superintendents. Rather, the study that follows argues that what both need is a new set of conditions in which to work. No longer need those concerned about public education wander like Diogenes, looking for mythical supermen possessed of Max Weber's (as distinct from today's) charisma, to govern our schools. Instead, we need to redefine the roles committeemen and superintendents must fill – creating others to accomplish other functions – so that what is to be done can be accomplished by those chosen to do it.

I hasten to add that such a redefinition is no easy task. Despite the still-enduring proposition that schools should be kept out of politics, education is one of the most thoroughly political enterprises in American life. While courts have long held that the quality of education is not justiciable, California's **Serrano vs. Priest** decision declared by implication that one of the chief contributors to that quality – its financing – is. And school finance is clearly a political enterprise. Any attempt to alter the system by which we educate our children – or any attempt to redefine its parts – is bound to face challenge, and is bound to emerge altered itself.

It is, I think, this sense of challenge, and of change, that separates Dr. Cook's findings and recommendations from earlier research sponsored by the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education. He gives us no easy solutions, and schoolmen looking for new methods to endure current problems must look elsewhere for those kinds of answers. Rather, his inquiry ultimately asks us to reexamine and to remake the context in which we ask our public educators to operate, to rethink the roles and responsibilities which we

have assigned to the actors in our educational institutions, and to find some new models. This is a new kind of research for the Advisory Council. Originally, the study proposed to examine the actors. But its findings revealed that the faults are not with the actors; instead, they are with the institutions. The problems facing the governance of public elementary and secondary education in Massachusetts today stem from a complex set of elements that comprise the environment in which school committeemen and superintendents work, and if change is to accomplish anything, it must focus on that environment. To my knowledge, MACE has not said this before.

I am glad to have been the principal advisor for this study. My conversations with the schoolmen of Massachusetts during the course of its development reaffirmed my faith in their talent, energy, conviction and concern, qualities I found in them ten years ago. Public schools in the Commonwealth are governed by qualified and capable men and women, and as the needs of our schools change, we must all continue our search for the ways to provide the quality education our children demand.

Robert C. Wood

Boston, Massachusetts

PREFACE

These are times of rapid change for public education, and this work has endeavored to follow their course. In May, 1971, when the study began, few thought that the Courts would call into question the fundamental means by which Massachusetts and other states made provision for public education. The local property tax, for good or ill, had always been the principal source of support for locally governed public schools. If the result left something to be desired, either within a school district or as between them, the problem was simply to find better ways to cope with a bad situation. That the underlying situation itself might be subject to substantial change was seldom considered.

In the late summer of 1971, the Supreme Court of California, in **Serrano vs. Priest** changed all that, by adding legal grounds to all the reasons of policy for viewing the present system as wrong in important respects. The Court however was less prepared to say what was right, and in state after state, the issue has become one of finding new ways to meet the responsibility to provide a system of public education that fairly responds to the needs of all young people and of the state itself.

The time was therefore right to take a fresh view of the public education enterprise as an entire public system, abstracting from the details of what educators do, and asking what those of us who are not in public education should do, since we share a responsibility for it and must devise a means to meet that responsibility. The question is less how should teachers teach, administrators administer, or school committees govern, than one of how the Commonwealth should provide a system in which all can do their jobs effectively, efficiently, and with reasonable equity for children, parents, taxpayers and employees.

This is the re-examination that this study attempts to initiate. As such, it has a broad scope, broader than could possibly be treated to standards of best research technique. The recommendations show desirable directions for change rather than highly specific programs. Since its recommendations would result in some adjustments of power relationships, we expect it to be criticized, both on relevant and irrelevant grounds. In a sense, it fits a former colleague's

description of himself as a teacher –*mean but fair; mean to everybody*. It most certainly contains editorializing and opinion, because, after all, a major purpose has been to try to lay the whole problem out and stimulate others to form their own opinions. If its only accomplishment was to cause more people to ask the right questions, we could still find considerable satisfaction in its results.

Many people have played important parts in the preparation of the study. Dennis Carey and W. Barry McNiff served as Research Assistants, and the latter carried major responsibility for the design and processing of the questionnaire.

Dr. Paul F. Ross served with the project in its early phases and aided in the conceptualization of its purpose and thrust. Marc Gerstein supplied great technical expertise in the design of the questionnaire and processing of the data.

Much use is made of a computer simulation of the mechanics of the present and proposed formulae for state aid to education. This work was the result of the interest of Professor John D. C. Little of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was executed by a team of graduate students headed by Charles Stabell, who was joined by Jerrold Grochow and Anders Haan. They worked closely with us for a period of months, and their results are being separately published as a Sloan Working Paper titled:

The Equalization of School Expenditures in Massachusetts

This paper will include the computer program devised for the analysis, as well as their results, and hence may be of considerable use to the state for years to come.

Professor Maurice A. Donahue and President Robert C. Wood of the University of Massachusetts provided many useful inputs and much moral and tangible support through periods of storm and stress, as the project attempted to keep its sights on a moving target. That we were able to meet our own standards for relevance is due in large part to their support, which was given unstintingly; or course, this does not constitue an endorsement, and responsibility for the views expressed is entirely my own.

The project was funded by the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education; however, my participation in it would not have been possible without the additional and much

appreciated support of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Ford Foundation.

Finally, many thanks are due to Miss Joanne Maccini, for secretarial service above and beyond the call of duty, in typing drafts, arranging meetings, coding questionnaires, keeping the books, and preparing final copy.

Paul W. Cook, Jr.

Cambridge, Massachusetts
June, 1972

CHAPTER I THE PROBLEM AND THE APPROACH

1. **Introduction.** The public education enterprise in Massachusetts and elsewhere gives every indication of being in deep trouble. On the town-school front, turnover of superintendents and school committee members is high, and protests or outright rejections of budgets or building programs are common. Students strike or vandalize, and the idea is seriously put forward that many would be better served if they were not in public school at all. The Department of Education finds itself in direct conflict with many districts on buiding or racial issues. Collective bargaining negotiations with teachers drag on vituperatively, and absenteeism is reported to be high. "If our teachers were as healthy this year as they were five years ago, we could afford teacher aides."

These are obvious signs of strain in the system, whether or not the educational outcomes for children are being affected adversely. No one really knows the answer to the question of whether outcomes are suffering in consequence of the strain or not. It does however seem to be a matter of simple common sense that time and energy that could be devoted to improving educational outcomes are being drained into attempts to cope with an over-burdened system for providing educational services. That system, in the sense of all the financial, managerial and political relationships built into law and practice, appears to be breaking down. The question is how to attack that problem, so that at very least the time and energy of those concerned with education can be more effectively utilized.

Our approach to the problem rests on the proposition that organizations cannot be meaningfully studied in the abstract, independently of the job they have to do. There are no universal maxims of organization, such that one can form judgments as to whether certain relationships or practices are good or bad, efficient or inefficient, productive or counter-productive, unless one has a sense of the purpose of the organization and can determine whether the relationships under study contribute to the achievement of that purpose or not.

In the conventional terminology, organizations exist to

implement a strategy. The word *strategy* is used here in the broadest possible sense, to incorporate the goals the organization is trying to accomplish; its estimate of the needs and of the risks and the opportunities that exist in the technological, social, economic and political environments; its sense of mission and direction derived from assessing its particular strengths and weaknesses and its environments; and lastly, the decisions on priorities and major commitments of competence and resources that are intended to carry the organization toward its goals. If thoroughly developed, a strategy might appear as a concept to be realized over a decade and a plan for moving in that direction covering the next three to five years. This in turn would control annual budgets. If such a grand design exists, one can then ask how to organize to accomplish the purposes, or whether the organization as it is working is effective.

This is an eclectic approach to the study of organizations; it uses whatever tools of scholarship address the problems as they are discovered and recognizes that both practice and research need judgment as well as technique. Two leaders in the development of this approach are Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and Philip Selznick, who have applied it to a variety of public and private enterprises.[1] Probably the most thorough development has been in the Business Policy Section of the Graduate School of Business Administration at Harvard University. Their approach to questions of organization is summarized as follows:

> "The simple prescription we wish to add here is that the nature of the corporate strategy must be made to dominate the design of organizational structure and processes. That is, the principal criterion for all decisions on organizational structure and behavior should be their relevance to the achievement of the organizational purpose, not their conformity to the dictates of special disciplines."[2]

The alternative to this approach is to study what might be considered the ultimate bureaucracy – a set of human relationships and tasks carried out for no purpose other than to carry them out, and no criterion of success other than tranquility. That may seem to be an absurd proposition

intellectually; it unfortunately is not always a totally unrealistic model, particularly in old organizations where the things are done the way they have always been done, because that is the way they always have been done.

We believe change, particularly the constructive adaptation to changed circumstances, is necessary. Therefore, the organization of the study borrows from the concepts of ecology. Thus, in Chapter II, which follows, we look at the environmental conditions affecting the capacity to bring about political and administrative changes in Massachusetts, both in general and with particular regard for education. How adaptable is the state and the public education enterprise?

In Chapter III, we look at how the public school organism is faring. What is happening that may affect the vitality of the system? How is the adaptive process working?

Chapter IV presents the principal conclusions that appear to be relevant to the capacity to find a successful adaptation, both in terms of the processes that seem to be at work and the organizational weaknesses they seem to manifest.

Chapter V reintroduces the concept of strategy, since human organizations are presumably able to exercise some control over both their environment and their processes of change. We look here at what the strategy seems to have been, in order to see how it is changing. In Chapter VI, we discuss the challenges that a new strategy must confront.

2. What Issues and What Problems?

The approach followed requires some relatively obvious questions to be raised:

(1) How do we assure the best educational technique will be used at any given level of resource commitment for the number and kind of children attending?

(2) How do we rationally decide the total resources to be committed to public education, and how do we distribute these to children and to different administrative units?

(3) What functions do we want public education to perform?

(4) How is the needed revenue to be raised, and

how are standards of equity in the raising of resources to be met?

Of course, the above do not begin to get to the full flavor of the on-going enterprise and they beg more questions (e.g., what is *best technique?*) than they answer. Furthermore, all enterprises, including public education, tend to shape their purposes to fit with the purposes of those involved in them. Not only the needs of children are involved. Like all enterprises, this one is run by people, and we do not know at the outset their agenda. In any enterprise as complex as public education, there may be many purposes to be served and there are few simple or straightforward measures of success.

The strategic requirements derive from the need to address questions such as the above in the context provided by current environmental problems which must be confronted. Those we will attempt to take into account are, in shorthand form –

(1) Problems of inflation, baby boom, and other factors leading to a condition approaching a "tax revolt."

(2) The quest for equalization of educational results and resources, by elimination of discrimination due to race or wealth.

(3) New knowledge, concepts or beliefs – including new uncertainties – concerning how young people learn, what they need for effective maturation and integration into adult society.

(4) The alienation of youth, both from conventional schooling and from traditional society.

(5) The bureaucratization of education, which has increased at a time when there have been increasing demands for participation and responsiveness.

We draw from these environmental changes three interrelated challenges that leadership must address:

(1) the need to explore and expand the options for various roles, offerings, learning environments, and sets of expectations for public schools, so that they might better meet the needs of *all* young people in *all* communities.

(2) the need to provide equalized educational opportunity at some level supportable by the state as a whole, so that comparable young people have a comparable chance to find an appropriate place in a diverse set of offerings.

(3) the need to make the organizational structure and processes of education flexible and adaptable, yet also consistent, enough to be able to respond creatively to the above challenges.

Along the way, of course, many subsidiary problems need to be attacked: school finance, collective bargaining, community relationships, relationships with state level offices, etc.

These challenges have not originated in a vacuum. They represent our synthesis of where the leading edge of change seems to be. This leading edge is found in universities, in all levels of governments from the national to the local, and in courts, executive offices, legislatures and in some local school administrations. We devote considerable time and space to why we regard them as appropriate.

If there is an overriding single question we have sought to answer it is *"What needs to happen in the way districts are organized and run to make it possible for public education to move forward in an effective, coherent way?"* The required changes may be at the district level, or at the level of those who determine the rules by which the districts must play. The least we hope to accomplish is better coping; our more ambitious hope is to show a way to increase effectiveness in moving toward goals.

It should of course be remembered that projects and recommendations do not implement themselves. The overriding purpose is to stimulate action, and for this, further study and much discussion among those with an interest in education will be required.

3. Where Does It Come Out? Following an approach controlled by the belief that organizations exist to implement a strategy caused the study to deviate from many early preconceptions of what its course would be. For example, we had an initial assumption there were different behaviors and skills that might be taught to school district managers that

would solve the problems. While we certainly do not oppose "management development," it became evident that this assumption was misleading, in that many of the observed problems had their origins in the rules by which the game of school district management was played, and could not be avoided. It seemed unreasonable even to expect that individuals of the apparently required ability could be hired or trained, as it seemed probable that even the very best were very vulnerable.

Specifically, we focus on three areas where state policy, or its absence, has been a strongly contributing factor in creating the observed stress. The areas of policy weakness are as follows:

(1) the effort to equalize educational opportunity – an avowed goal of the state – by advising and proposing property tax relief measures, instead of attacking the problem directly.

(2) the apparent reliance on efforts to improve liaison between districts and between them and the Department and Board of Education through creation of regional offices, building from the Department down to the districts, instead of building from the districts up toward the Department and the Board.

(3) the effort to carry on local collective bargaining in the absence of any policy position or guidance on the determinants of appropriate salary levels for teachers.

Inadequate policies in these areas will be shown to have forced on many district managements an unsupportable and continuing burden of establishing the local commitment to education in terms of a local estimate of priorities and wealth, at a time of widespread tax revolt; among other things they have inhibited the development of either formal or informal support systems that might help districts better to manage their affairs, and prevented the development of a rational system for allocating resources to education on the basis of statewide resources and priorities. Under these circumstances, some districts might for a time cope with problems better than others, but few could avoid substantial controversy entirely or for long, or lead the state education

system as a whole toward new and necessary goals.

In all these cases, alternatives are available that can do much to remedy the problems of the districts, and the remedies are consistent with substantial local control and independence. At least one set of alternatives is indicated in the text. The principal difficulty to overcome is the reluctance to abandon approaches that have failed.

4. The Relationship to On-going Activities.

In the past year, the Board of Education published a general statement of the purposes of public education in Massachusetts, and initiated a program of discussion of them in the districts.[3] This manifests concern with the need for a common purpose and direction, even if the goals "don't look much different than they did in 1920," to quote one commentator. Perhaps there is no reason why they should. On the other hand, the world has changed greatly, and what it takes to move education toward those goals in the conditions of the 1970's is doubtless very different than before. This is where a strategy must be developed, a way found to make progress. The document recognizes this need, by concluding as follows, at page 15:

> This then is the challenge:
>
> FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
>
> How can the human and financial resources of the Department contribute to the fulfillment of these goals?
>
> What outcomes would indicate that such resources are being used effectively toward this end?
>
> What tasks must be performed and who will be responsible for performing them for the desired results to be achieved?
>
> FOR LOCAL SCHOOL OFFICIALS, PARENTS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND CITIZENS
>
> What can be done to provide the human and financial resources necessary to fulfill these goals in your school district?
>
> What outcomes would provide sufficient evidence that these resources are having an effect upon achievement of these goals?

What tasks must be performed at the local level if the desired results are to be achieved?

There is further evidence for the existence of strategic thinking at the state Board of Education level, in a position paper titled *The Results Approach to Education and Educational Imperatives* (1971). This paper lists 14 areas in which priorities should be established and programs of change initiated, which in general are embodied in the three challenges we address, though our statement and approach may differ.

What is however not clear is whether or how district level governance or organizational relationships fit in. Will the constituent school systems, as presently organized and run, move toward the goals or address the problems in ways that manifest the priorities? Without accepting here the substance of the statement of needs, this poses the fundamental question. Is the system capable of moving as indicated, and what will make it more capable of doing so?

5. Some Things Not Done.

Taking the approach we did caused us substantially to ignore some issues that might seem worth study.

For example, we did not re-examine the issue of "fiscal autonomy", which produces an annual debate in the Legislature. Partly we feel it is an empty issue. How much autonomy there is depends on how it is used, which varies greatly from place to place. More important, the experience of Boston, which lacks it, and of other states, which do not have it, suggests that it doesn't make that much difference. Once the political pressures and the responsibilities were re-aligned, the probable outcome would be about the same, although the transition might be painful.

Far more important, however, is the fact that we conclude it is an out-of-date issue. The issue for the future is not fiscal autonomy of school committees, but the local autonomy of school districts, in terms of their level of resource commitment. More simply, the question will be not whether some school committees can do as much as they want, but whether others can do as little as they do.

A more general category of things not done concerns the investigation of a broad range of specific management

paractices in the school districts that might help them better to cope with their problems. In the first place, coping behavior isn't good enough if there are alternatives that lead to improvement. In the second place, we believe this is a task better carried out by the managers, particularly superintendents, themselves. We do make recommendations that would help them to do this better, and we are confident that ways to more effectively share their accumulated knowledge would help them more than we could.

Finally, we did not attempt to make the extremely important, but immensely difficult, step of tying governance relationships directly to educational outcomes. This was intentional. The reason is that most studies conclude that school factors ordinarily account for only 30% to 40% of educational outcomes (the balance being accounted for by socio-economic factors outside the schools) and we were not sure how much governance or management factors affected all school factors. Nor did we have much confidence in our or anyone else's ability to measure either with precision. Since a 10% "improvement" in school-related factors would only improve "outcomes" as most seem to measure them by 3% to 4%, the chances of coming up with something significant, and accepted as such, were infinitesimal.

We turned therefore to a proposition stated earlier. It is obvious, and our study illustrates the fact, that the situation in school district management is causing a great deal of time and energy to be drained away from concern with and attention to educational outcomes. Subsequently, we found much that placed obstacles in the path of any policy that might try to increase that concern. If these obstacles can be removed, and of the "game" of school administration constructively changed so that more energy and attention can be given to outcomes, then we may see the ultimate result that is our controlling interest. This is, of course, an improvement in the quality of the education offered to the children.

CHAPTER II THE CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO CHALLENGE

1. Beyond Pluralism. Whenever one takes an administrative or managerial look at the whole of Massachusetts, or any of its statewide sub-systems, he is immediately struck by the extent to which the state has been Balkanized geographically and syndicalized occupationally. By Balkanized, we refer to the number, strength, and sense of independence of political sub-divisions. By syndicalized we refer to a system of social organization in which economic interest groups are organized among other things to promote and defend their interests through political action.

Syndicalism is the organizational equivalent of geographical Balkanization, and the results tend to be about the same. The hallmark is the politization of social, technical, economic, or administrative decisions that are not inherently political.[1] It often exists virtually unrecognized, since it has little doctrinal support except from such dubious sources as Salazar and Mussolini. It involves organized economic interest groups in attempting to solve economic or administrative problems through processes of coalition formation, compromise, bargaining and other political processes. It might be called pluralism, which conveys the sense of a variety of groups, but more is involved because the groups have sought and acquired political power and legitimacy, which is used as such to further or protect their interests.

A principal result is that any movement toward common solutions to shared problems is enormously tedious and difficult, with separate interests being guarded jealously and promoted vigorously. Compromise solutions, once worked out, often resemble the proverbial camel which is alleged to be a horse designed by a committee. (The aid to education system in Massachusetts is a good case in point.) The difficulty is not just one that affects school governance, but virtually every aspect of political life in Massachusetts that calls for statewide approach. Transportation, trash disposal, pollution control, road and highway construction, urban decay, regional planning, economic development, higher education – virtually every aspect of state government must

play the game of trying to find something for everyone at best, or complete immobilization in the face of growing crisis at worst.

Two other consequences tend to reinforce the basic situation. The first is a fortress mentality, in which people no longer look to society in a large sense to aid in the solution of large social problems, but to small cohesive units that can protect against the influence of other small, cohesive units. Thus, the number of represented interest groups tends to increase over time, making the difficulties of achieving a consensus program greater. While some power centers may be on the ebb, such as traditional ethnic divisions, others seem continually to be rising. Secondly, the complexities of taking action tend to produce stagnation and frustration, so that people work for small and limited gains for themselves, and seldom come to grips with the total problems which seem – and are – too complex to handle.

Since the payoff lies in limited gains, the leadership of the organizations tends to gravitate toward the kind of people who are content to or even enjoy playing that sort of game. The statesmen phase out, the generals move in. This is a process that manifests itself in increasing militancy and polarization, and in tactics involving the use or threat of power, rather than a cooperative search for mutually advantageous solutions. This is a process which we will assert is visible right now in public education in Massachusetts, influencing school committees, teacher organizations, various municipal interests affected by schools and others.

One often hears the question asked why Massachusetts, with perhaps the greatest reservoir of brainpower in any political entity in the world, cannot better order its affairs. In point of fact, there are many examples that could be offered of leadership in designing programs of change. However, the state has also created an enormously complex and highly differentiated power structure, such that brainpower alone is not adequate to devise methods of implementation where the number of parties at interest is large. Solutions are vastly easier to find than ways to put them into effect. That as much progress as has been made has been possible at all is testimony to the development of political skills and sophistication that can at times meet the challenge.

Add to this fractionization a great cultural diversity, a problem of economic stagnation, an explosive rate of general environmental change, and the pressures of an archaic and outmoded fiscal system, and one begins to wonder what sort of cement there is that will hold the state together at all. The late 1950's and the 1960's may, as has been suggested, come to be viewed as the Golden Age of the Commonwealth, but optimism seems quite hard to find as the mid-1970's approach. [2]

The fiscal problem is particularly onerous and frustrating. The direct and indirect commitments to provide services or privileges, most supportable as good things, have far outrun the historic tax base and rate structure. Where services tend to be essential, or spending programs are underfunded, the cities and towns must provide what the state or federal governments will not. This may be a direct charge, or the indirect consequences of underfunding or failing to provide financial aid for cities and towns; therefore, the great rise in local property taxes.

The property tax is a cruel and regressive tax, and one that has the unfortunate consequence of placing the interests of children in direct opposition to other bread and butter interests at the lowest level of government, the city or town. One tries, for example, to think of another society that has placed the interests of its young and its old in such direct opposition.

The opposition revolves around schools, which used to be thought of as institutions to provide cultural continuity, and it is a direct consequence of the means of financing education. Economists and lawyers may protest, but historians and anthropologists must be absolutely aghast at the extent to which we have institutionalized inter-generational conflict.

It seems a characteristic of the political style of the state to place parties that should and must cooperate in day-to-day business into adversary roles when decisions involving both must be made. Thus, virtually every party to the conduct of public enterprise has his interest group and his core of statutory privileges that are defended against all comers. Schools and school interests are no different.

2. Multiple Interests and the Schools. Massachusetts seems unintentionally to have done about all it possibly could to insure that cities and towns would have bad relationships with their school systems. In the school situation, cities and towns and school districts are are responsible to essentially the same electorates, since in the typical case, the city or town is the school district. Issues and officials for school and town appear typically on the same ballots or warrants. This tends to involve the non-parent group in school affairs more than would otherwise be the case, and the result is less support for schools. The school system has been given fiscal autonomy, which appears to mean that the school committee can establish whatever budget it wants, and the resulting tax goes on the city tax rate, albeit as a separately identifiable item. Fiscal autonomy is of course generally perceived to be a strongly pro-education measure; probably – not certainly – it is, but it is clearly an advantage often enjoyed at the price of harmonious relationships. Both in many of the cities and towns and in the Legislature, it produces an annual conflict and acrimonious debate.

State aid is allocated on a school aid, not municipal aid, basis, but it is paid to the cities and towns, since school districts are not fiscal agents. School aid comes as a reimbursable expenditure, meaning that its amount is determined by what the districts have spent in a prior year. It is not identified with current school budget decisions, since it is the reflection of budget decisions of previous years. No one knows for certain if the Legislature will fund state aid entitlements, and since entitlements are determined in part by averages that no one knows until it is too late, no one can with confidence relate a decision on a new expenditure level to the distribution formula. No one can predict with confidence what school costs the local property tax will have to bear. Furthermore, our questionnaire data show no consistent judgment at the district level as to whether additional state aid would go to schools, to other municipal services, or to tax relief. Increasing aid levels would do nothing to resolve conflicts, whatever it might do as a tax equity measure. As a policy instrument communicating or having an effect on what communities *should* spend, it is totally inefficient.

It has been possible to tamper with the formula to give special favors to some class of community, and both historically and at the present time, municipal interests and school interests carry their local incapacity to reach an agreement right into the Legislature, where representatives with school governance backgrounds or municipal administration backgrounds carry on the contest in their stead. [3] A principal consequence of fiscal autonomy seems to have been to free some municipal officials to criticize without having to worry about the consequences for schools, and for some school officials to seek to respond directly to their estimate of need and what the community will bear. Sometimes this means "throwing the budget on the desk" of other elected officials. "If they give us a bad time, we just mail it in." Other times, it means tactics such as "the mayor just submitted last year's budget."

There is no evidence that this feature has caused school spending to be unresponsive to the wealth of the local community; exactly the opposite is the case. It can of course always be argued that the responsiveness is too little and too late, if local conditions are to be that important in determining levels of commitment. Whatever the case, the mechanisms of reconciliation are weak, and those of conflict generation are strong.

Meanwhile, the processes of the municipal government control the school plant, so that school officials have little direct influence over the facilities in which their programs are to be offered. The Board of Education can mandate kindergarten but be nullified by a lack of space, or municipal government can virtually force an open campus plan on a high school, by not providing adequate space, and then blame the school system for what the young people are doing when they are not in school. If operating budgets are tight because of the same sort of pressure, what could be a useful learning experience can be turned into simply an opportunity to waste a great deal of time.

Reform has been made doubly difficult by divided interests within each group, mostly on the Boston, other urban, suburban, and rural division, but also by the split between the vocational and regular academic interests and the interests of other categorical programs which must be

served. Groups that attempt to represent all cities and towns, or all school districts, over-represent the rural and suburban areas, where there are many units of government, but not nearly so many people. For example, over half of the public school pupils are in only 50 of over 350 school districts. This of course biases the representation of school interests away from where all the people are, which bears some relationship to where political power lies in the Legislature, and will bear an increasingly strong relationship in the future.

For the interested parties to work out their separate disagreements and to present the Legislature with a unified position seems nearly to be impossible. The predictable consequence is inaction and continued disagreement, and more emphasis on focused effort to secure or block limited gains by limited groups.

These struggles for constructive problem solving occur within and among some 351 cities and towns, most of which got their boundaries over a century ago, and most of which have come to be far more interconnected with their neighbors than in the past. They are fiercely independent of each other as well as of state government. At a time when most of the nation is consolidating school districts, Massachusetts is expanding them, as the communities look for limited forms of involvement with their neighbors to retain some local control over those functions where control might be preserved. Thus, for example, communities will join a regional high school district but not integrate their elementary schools into it, regardless of the loss of articulation of programs which must help insure that the transition between grade levels was made better for the children. Vocational schools are repeatedly held up while constituent communities squabble over the terms for representation of the various cities and towns that may be members of the vocational school district. Union school committees, where one superintendent attempts to superivse several small independent districts, are repeatedly torn by the separate interests of the separate communities or their different situations with respect to tax base and tax rate. The Balkanization reaches almost absurd proportions. Thus, Martha's Vineyard Island, which has too few children to make a single efficient school system as it is, has a union school committee, a regional high

school committee, and six local elementary school committees.

One consequence of this diversity is that it becomes difficult to identify precisely statewide problems, because they appear as a compilation of local problems that are arising at somewhat different times, in somewhat different ways, in highly differing political units. Thus, for example, the decline of private schools, or racial imbalance, or a tax revolt, never quite get the attention they deserve, because such problems hit one community one year, another the next, and some not at all.

A related problem is situational perspective. What ought to be an important element of leadership in the state – its professional line-officers of education – tend to see the problems of education as those they are facing at the time, while those charged with at least thinking about the state as a whole are removed from the pressures and realities of operating schools in today's conditions. The question is rately asked, except in casual conversation, whether the state has created an unworkable system, or what might be done to make it workable.

The geographic compartmentalism and defensiveness has its counterpart in the organizational structure of education. For example, there are ten separate organizations in the Massachusetts Educational Conference Board, most of which represent a group involved in the actual delivery of educational services. Not all such groups are included, but each of these has a common core of interests that is in most cases protected or encouraged by specific legislation. Collective bargaining and tenure protection for teachers is the most obvious case, with the statutory rights and privileges of school committees running a close second. However, there are several such areas that pose chronic issues which divide this group, such as administrative tenure, certification of teachers, minimum pay, or the various rights and responsibilities and privileges of the partners.

Each of these rights and privileges, for whoever possesses them, acts to curtail the power of the others, and it is symptomatic of the organizational problems of education at the district level that the Conference Board cannot take action except on a unanimous vote. School systems cannot

change except by consent of the parties involved.

The layering of groups with a core of protected self-interest has a corresponding horizontal structure. The most obvious is the split between vocational school interests and conventional public education, where the former characteristically resists with all the political influence it can muster any effort to treat it as engaged in the same general sort of activity as the former. This chronic antagonism is only the peak of the iceberg, however. Each of many of categorical grant programs has its need for separate recognition and influence, and its basis for demands for special recognition and treatment. To try to put together a program that deals with the total educational problem of a total system is like building a house of cards – one falls and collapse ensues. In addition, of course, it is an exhausting business to write all the proposals, deal with all the agencies, and adjust to whatever their particular perceptions of problems are at the present time.

There are of course countless other groups or parties at interest. Students, racial groups, municipal officials, pro- or anti-busing groups, business groups, teacher training institutions, the League of Women Voters, taxpayer organizations, and loose and shifting **ad hoc** committees all give the power structure the full ecological richness of a climax jungle, where the situation of each of the many species acts to stabilize the situation of all the others.

Of course, these groups are not motivated solely or even predominantly by self-interest; education has never wanted for public spirited people. However, each does have a core of self-interest, very likely identified with the public interest, and this core of power and interest is not to be yielded lightly. Thus, what appears to be a vertical hierarchy, with the Board of Education at the top, if one were to look at a conventional organization chart, is to a considerable extent simply an aggregation of groups with interrelated specialties. If push comes to shove, each has substantial power to protect itself against the others, so such coordination as exists must be the result of cooperation, not of any flow of power and authority from top to bottom.

It is important to understand that this array of interests which does so much to prevent the system from responding

to environmental change grew out of consecutive demands to make the system responsive to the interests of its constituent members. Tenure laws grew out of abuses; collective bargaining grew out of some excessively unilateral decision making; fiscal autonomy grew out of fiscal or educational irresponsibility. The state has attempted to make the system responsive to a myriad of interests that seemed legitimate, and the consequence seems to have been the immobilization of the system as a whole, so that it can respond to any or to common interest only with great difficulty.

3. **Consequences of Rigidity**. In a time of environmental change, an organism must adapt or go into decline. Massachusetts has created a singularly unadaptable organism in a time of increasing environmental stress. So many of the incentives of the various specialized parts are so strongly to maintain the **status quo**, and the organism as a whole is so complex, that one cannot be highly optimistic about its ability to find a viable adaptation.

Decline of course does not mean that public schools will cease to exist. It means simply that they will become less and less vital, less and less central to the ongoing thrust of society, more given to doing routine things in routine ways, less well supported and less looked to for answers to the needs of either children or society as a whole. (It may well be asked whether some have already declined in this sense.) It is difficult to avoid the prognosis, for not only public education but for the state as a whole, that its constituent groups will work harder and harder to protect less and less, until the prize is no longer worth the game. Even if our governmental institutions were flexible and responsive, the challenge of the next decades would be enormous, due to inherent disadvantages the state must overcome. As it is, the Commonwealth must face as one of its highest priority problems that it is ill-equipped to respond to any problem, due to the enormously complex power structure that has evolved. As most observers recognize, the state needs a new Constitution, just for openers.

It is worth noting in passing that the Massachusetts Board and/or Department of Education, viewed either from the school district level or from the level of the Legislature or

other executive departments, often appears simply just another group in the power structure. It is looked to as a leader only to the extent it does what the followers want; when it pushes its own agenda, it is often regarded as a menace. This is not a comment on the merits of the Department of Education, but simply on the extent to which the specialization of interest leads all groups to be viewed with suspicion, and any change in relationships to encounter resistance. Local control, with equal emphasis on *local* and *control*, has clearly become an end in itself, as have so many other interests. Thus, for example, we find respondents in school districts that have long offered kindergarten objecting vigorously to the fact that the Board of Education should require it, or communities which would welcome aid on buildings bitterly resenting any conditions on that aid, no matter how well founded. The law may well have made school committeemen be officers of the state, clothed them with the mantle of a popular election, and created what appears to be a hierarchy, but the hierarchy is no more a channel of authority and leadership than any other set of relationships between separate interest groups arranged in a vertical structure.

Given the enormously complex power structure, it is an organizational fact of life that neither authority nor responsibility can be fixed in public education except upon the system as a whole. The performance of each specialized function is so conditioned by the performance of other specialized functions over which there is limited control that there is no place where responsibility and accountability can reasonably be fixed. This is most evident in the city bureaucracies that are responsible for the education of more than half of the Massachusetts public school students. Massachusetts is alleged to be virtually the inventor of educational bureaucracy.[4] It is, however, equally true even in the smaller and more homogeneous districts, where the involvement and participation by multiple interests make clear delegations impossible.

This is even more evident in the case of teachers, who almost never have freedom to teach as well as they know how in the situation and with the children with whom they find themselves. Tenure provisions may give some the authority to

teach poorly, but innumerable prohibitions, administrative constraints, nickel and dime budgetary considerations, involvements by others in and out of the formal line of authority, make it impossible to expect all to teach as well as they possibly could.

The principal victims of this difference between organizational appearance – a vertical authority structure – and organizational reality – an array of substantially autonomous specialized functions – seem to be the superintendents. Since people often think superintendents have power which in fact they lack, they expect them to perform feats in the use of power that are in fact impossible. This divergence between expectations and performance is of course a generalized statement of the cause of rising turnover. The superintendents themselves are much more aware of the ever-shrinking scope of discretionary authority, to the point where many seem to be trying to regard themselves as advisory staff officers, rather than operating line officers. There is unfortunatley no way to make those to whom they are ultimately responsible accept this concept, since school committees and the public from which they come are free to think whatever they want, realities notwithstanding. In the words of one,

> Superintendents, statewide, are charged with responsibilities no longer within their control. Collective bargaining, teacher militancy, state involvement, public involvement, pupil involvement, etc., is such that the superintendent's power is based on moral persuasion not (law or authority). Unfortunately, as yet the public and most school committees don't understand this.

It is not clear that the advisory role is an appropriate concept, except for people concerned only to survive and cope in the face of impossible demands. Such, however, appears to be the situation in many cases.

The general situation is however that only the system as a whole can be examined for effectiveness and viability, since its constituent parts are so independent, both geographically and in the vertical structure, that no one organization or group can be said to be in effective control.

Kurt Lewin is credited with being the principal source of what is called Force Field Analysis, in which people try to

classify problems as originating in themselves, in others, or in the environment.[5] The test of "others" versus the "environment" is whether it is reasonable to suppose that other individuals might fill the opposing roles and cause the problem to disappear. If something is causing that kind of person to fill the opposing role or causing whoever fills it to behave as observed, and the cause doesn't lie within one's self, then the problem is environmental, and the question is whether that environment can be changed. This, it seems, is what we must confront – an environmental situation that militates strongly against constructive and cooperative problem solving.

CHAPTER III CURRENT CONDITIONS: THE CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

1. How Is Change Occurring? The preceding chapter presents an essentually static picture of the balance of power and the rigidities of structure in Massachusetts public education. In this chapter, we look for dynamics, that is, a picture of how the system is changing and why, and with what probable outcomes. We will describe what is going on in school districts and how certain problems are being handled.

Our description derives from several sources: unstructured interviews and discussions; structured interviews in the pre-test of a 611-item questionnaire set; the questionnaire set itself, administered to three or four respondents in 27 communities, selected to give a geographical dispersion, and a range of sizes and levels of wealth; and miscellaneous sources such as newspaper coverage, articles, telephone conversations, etc. To be conservative, we initially made a split run of the data, using a sample of the sample for an initial phase of hypothesis formation and general search for what appeared to be significant relationships, and we then tested these generalizations against the results for the sample as a whole. Finally, we distributed this chapter to several knowledgeable readers, simply to see if any conclusions appeared wrong in the light of their experience. Appendix A includes the questionnaires, more discussion of method, and some of the data used in drawing the major conclusions asserted in this chapter.

The above can never meet all the tests of scientific method, because the problems of inferring causal relationships that are working over time from cross sectional (inter-district at a point of time) data are enormous and ultimately insurmountable. Strictly speaking, our results should be couched in highly equivocal language, such as *the data do not contradict the hypothesis that*, etc. We have endeavored to spare ourselves and our readers this tedium, but all the usual warnings concerning questionnaire, sample, or correlational data apply. Perhaps the best way to summarize is simply to say that this is how it looks to us, having gone through the steps shown above.

The objective is not simply to describe. It is obvious that the system is under stress, and reasonably well agreed that the origins of this stress were a combination of factors such as the baby boom and inflation, giving rise to greatly increased cost; the reliance on the local property tax, giving rise to protest and a near tax-revolt; the alienation of the young and the development of behavior patterns that offended many of their elders.

It is also reasonably obvious that environmental stress had contributed to many incidents that are symptoms of stress – increased school committee turnover, superintendent firings, budget or bond issue rejections, student strikes, and tedious, sometimes acrimonious, relationships with teachers, especially in collective bargaining.

Our effort has been not simply to take a census of the extent of the symptoms or to conduct an opinion poll, but to understand intermediate causes and interconnections, to be able to comprehend how the administrative system as a whole is responding and with what effect. It is in the light of such understanding of *system* that recommendations can be framed. Without such understanding, there is no way to know whether some proposed relief will accomplish anything for good.

Environmental change is ordinarily expected to stimulate adaptive change, and a simplistic view of the mechanism in school governance might be simply that a community with new needs elects a new school committee which introduces new policies. Since the school committee is supposed to be the policy making body for the schools, the representative of the ultimate authority of the state and the representative of the community, change is theoretically expected to occur as a consequence of a change in their composition and beliefs. The question is, is this the way it works?

2. The Effect of School Committee Turnover. In the sample of 27 communities, the process was clearly at work in its initial step. Out of a total of 116 school committee members, 50 were in their first term of office. Most chairmen were first elected to the committee in 1967, so the leadership had an average period of service at the time of the questionnaire of five years. Only eleven of the 27 chairmen

would say that they would run for office again. Average tenure on the committees was slightly over three years, or about one term (some committees had four-year terms).

Committees with more new members appear to regard issues of budget, capital spending and collective bargaining as more controversial in their communities than do committees with more long service members. While the results lack a high level statistical significance, correlations exist between number of new members and these three issues and show with respect to them and to the exclusion of others the relatively greater weight. However, against this reasoning is the evidence that low seniority committees regard cost-effective educational management as significantly less important than do the more senior committees.

It seems clearly possible that the more senior committees manifest the same concern, but due to longer exposure prefer to refer to it in the more sophisticated terminology in use today. Put another way, there is no evidence that senior committees regard economic issues as unimportant or that they are being unresponsive to the general atmosphere of budgetary presssure.

Our inference is that the usual causality on policy changes needs a minor modification. What seems to be happening in many cases is that the pressure and controversy are causing more school committeemen not to seek re-election, which of course draws in new members. These new members are acutely aware of the controversies, many see them in a somewhat different light by virtue of their newness, but on the whole they do not differ on what the issues are all that much from those they replace. For example, where budget is a major issue, it is not simply a case of cost cutters driving out big spenders.

One consequence of turnover is that the typical superintendent works for a committee most of whose members did not appoint him. An average of 2.2 present members were members when the superintendent was appointed, less than half the average committee, and the average superintendent has been in office 6.3 years. Thus, if, as one superintendent suggested, there is less of a sense of mutual obligation and support between a committee and a superintendent whom they did not hire, this lower level of obligation is a

characteristic of the governance relationship today. There is an accumulation of weak evidence supporting the idea that new members judge superintendents more severely, in that on seven areas of professional evaluation, committees with more first term members had lower evaluations of their superintendents than committees with highter seniority.

Another consequence of the turnover of school committee members is decreased job satisfaction for the superintendent. The study duplicated job satisfaction criteria used by Neal Gross and his associates in their classic **Explorations in Role Analysis.**[2] We believe there is a general tendency toward less satisfaction to be associated with more members in their first term, based on interviews as much as on questionnaire data, where the statistical evidence was not strong. For example, comparing answers to the question: *Do you feel that the work which you do as a superintendent is satisfying?* to the answers to *How many members are in their first term?* showed a correlation of .2885 and a significance level of .022. The scoring of responses showed that a tendency toward lower satisfaction exists, though is not very marked.

Not the least of the reasons would seem to be simply that new members take up a lot of time. For example, the more new members, the less likely the superintendent is to see himself as having adequate leisure time.

We suspect this result has more operational significance than might at first be evident. Four superintendents in the sample of 27 resigned or were fired in the six weeks or so following the questionnaire, which came, incidentally, at the peak workload period for most, around town meeting time. Yet only two of 116 members of school committees were seen as being elected with clear "anti-superintendent" platforms. Furthermore, superintendents predominantly saw the most recent elections as making their school committees more liberal (which surprised us) and there are other indications that fundamental disagreements (as opposed perhaps scepticism, personal aggressiveness or a need to be convinced) were not increasing. If there were disagreements, they showed up more as the superintendent having less confidence in the school committee's ability to handle problems than the committee with new members had in itself.

Of course, a principal disagreement is on whether the solution to district problems can be found by the simple expedient of hiring a new superintendent. Given the time consumed in search, the new person's need for familiarization and his limited ability to produce change, we would assume the opposite, and that many firings are more symbolic gestures than attacks on underlying problems.

We suspect that however sheer exhaustion is taking its toll, that new members contribute to this, and in this way add to other problems, and that this fact may be at least as important as policy disagreements. This is especially true if exhausted people–both superintendents and school committeemen–are more susceptible to flare-ups, impatience or personal conflicts. We believe this human overload is an important element affecting adversely the adaptive capacity of school districts in many ways, and it will be discussed more fully later on.

3. **Issues and Individuals.** What sort of people are on school committees at this time, how do they see the issues, and how do they appraise their capacity to deal with them? Do they generally agree with the superintendent on these matters? The most frequently cited issues, ranked by the importance to the community, are plant, budget, collective bargaining, and curriculum. It is interesting to note that only five superintendents and five school committee chairmen saw youth behavior as among the four most important problems facing their district, despite the issues so often surrounding such moves as that toward open campus plans in the high school. We interpret this as supporting the idea that, if there is a community reaction against young people, it isn't reflected in the composition of school committees. They emerge as being at least tolerant of young people and not interested in making an issue of their conduct. Indeed, it seems more likely that a community will elect a relatively young person to the committee, in an effort to have their point of view represented, than that it will support a hard-liner.

While virtually every district reported budget as a major problem, only 28 of the 116 school committee members were described by the superintendents as having run on a cost

cutting platform. It appears that, despite some examples to the contrary, taxpayer pressure is felt by incumbents whose primary interests lie with the schools, far more than it is manifested by direct election of people running on a cost cutting platform. We do not expect many cases such as that reported in Whitman, where in essence the Finance Committee ran for and was elected to the school committee.

What we do however find is some confirmation of what field interviews led us to expect. General civic duty is cited as a principal motive for running for school committee in only 44 of 116 cases of attributed motives, while what we would consider as a case of having some "axe to grind" appears in 103. Of these, 49 are political in character. Twenty-five were thought to want political exposure and experience, 16 sought to represent some group, and 8 were alleged to be interested in patronage. The remaining "axes," cited 54 times but in some cases more than one motive was ascribed, are about evenly divided between concern for cost and general dissatisfaction with the schools. Thus, there are far more people on school committees who are seen by their superintendents as having mixed or non-supportive agendas for the system as a whole than there are those credited with a desire first to learn and then to serve.

We had expected the political motivations to be concentrated in the nine cities in the sample, each of which had a population in excess of 40,000. The logic is of course that an unpaid school committee job can provide access to a paid political career in the city environment. This did not prove unambiguously to be the case. Superintendents believed only 10 city members are seeking political experience of 25 so labelled in the total sample. On the other hand, school committee respondents from the cities thought that 16 members were interested in holding other political offices, an average slightly less than two per committee. A very interesting fact emerged in the existence of a negative relationship between superintendent dismissals and the politically oriented committee. Non-political committees seem more likely to change superintendents than do political ones. Our tentative conclusion is that where politically oriented committeemen have been on the committee for some time, they have confidence in their ability to "handle" the

superintendent in ways that at least meet their own needs, while non-political members may adopt the "new broom" philosophy. Cambridge (not in the sample) may be illustrative, in that a superintendent who was supported by a traditional political power base in the city was removed when a reform slate secured a majority of the school committee.

This is of course only what seems to have been happening in early 1972, and it probably is a reflection of the tendency for committees to be seen as more liberal. If, for example, committees swung the other way, bringing politics into what had been a non-political system, the statistical result might have been the opposite. In at least one case, this is alleged to have occurred, but it is the current exception, rather than the rule.

Committees with several of the politically ambitious represented do appear more aggressive in their inter-personal relationships. We received some amusing evidence on the "Massachusetts political style." The political committees appear more combative and occasionally abusive, and they see others in the same light, and yet they regard both the process and their sometime antagonists as fair; there is somewhat greater recognition of the other fellow's territory, and they manifest a pragmatic acceptance of outcomes. This style of "letting it all hang out," of building a reputation as a fighter, seems characteristic in Massachusetts politics. Unfortunately, it seems to create a cultural gap with education, where the norms are different. Educational politics may be nastier, as some interviewees in both arenas suggest, but the behavioral norms are more genteel–the stiletto instead of the axe. This stylistic difference was credited by several interviewees as a major source of political ineffectiveness for educators, who seem anxious always to avoid the head-on-head confrontations that many Massachusetts politicians seem to relish.

Field interviews had led us to expect more combative or aggressive people, whether politically oriented or not, fewer who were general civic leaders or local businessmen (who are tending to avoid controversy), more who were not adverse to controversy either because of conviction or because of the challenge and the public exposure it offers. The questionnaire evidence supplies some information on this point. Teachers

saw collective bargaining relationships as significantly less friendly when there were more new members, and they trusted them less. There was more personal antagonism perceived in the relationship. Interestingly enough, the relationships with municipal officials seem more cordial, which may reflect a swing of new members toward the views held by municipal officials.

There is less apparent conflict on basic matters with superintendents than with teachers, perhaps because superintendents are becoming very circumspect. Some volunteered that their objective was to survive. Others referred to themselves as "consultants" or "resident experts" or "staff" for the committee or the community. Some of these seem clearly to be practicing issue avoidance, taking their cues from the committee and keeping in line. Of course, this tends to make the school committee the **de facto** executive officer for the district. Given the rapidity of change of committees, and their relative inexperience with school matters, the chances of capricious and random direction would be expected to increase.

Harry Truman once remarked, "If you can't stand the heat, don't go in the kitchen." A principal result of the stress and controversy surrounding schools seems to be to attract those who don't mind the stress and controversy; the question is whether this occurs at the expense of reconciliation or steps to change the policies or environments of the systems in such a way as to reduce the controversy.

School committeemen see ample controversy. There were 11 cases where building needs were seen by the school committee as an issue, and in over half of these the issue was perceived as a heated controversy. Also, the opposition was seen as highly organized.

The budget was seen as highly controversial in eight communities, strongly so in nine, reflecting the top two categories in a 5-point scale. In eight communities the opposition was highly organized. Collective bargaining was an important issue in 13 communities, regarded as substantially controversial in nine, but nowhere highly so. It appears this is less a public issue than an issue within the schools themselves, but it still ranked as more a center of controversy than most

other issues to which school committees addressed themselves.

The only other issue involving heated controversy was the cost-effectiveness of school management. This produced substantial controversy in one-half of the eight districts in which it was cited as an issue.

It is of interest that only eight school committees believe their communities regard the educational results being achieved as among the top four issues, and none regard it either most important or as highly controversial at this time. This sheds interesting light on the general conclusion of a study conducted by Frederik E. Anderson, leading to a Master's thesis at the Sloan School of Management at MIT.[2] Mr. Anderson, an aeronautical engineer, was a school board member in Ohio, and in his work as a Sloan Fellow during 1971-72, he attempted to delineate formally the system dynamics of school committee policy formation. Drawing on his own experiences and his observations of six Boston suburbs, he concluded that behavior of school committees appeared motivated by traditional (essentially unexamined) educational goals, and the desire for tranquility. Much of the action and interactions of the committees could only by explained as an effort to keep things quiet and the "last year versus this year" changes minimal.

Budget and plant issues are seen as those the committee is least able to deal with effectively. Bargaining is rated as difficult but not so much so, while committees are confident on matters of curriculum. Educational results and cost-effective management are also of medium difficulty for several. The picture clearly emerges of very many school committees, regardless of where their personal interests might be, having their time and energy pre-empted by economic concerns which both involve substantial controversy and opposition, and which they feel ill-equipped to resolve satisfactorily.

One problem of Massachusetts is worth noting in passing, because of its conspicuous absence. Not one of the 27 school committee respondents cited racial problems as a major issue in their district. (Two superintendents cited it as the major problem.) This highlights both the character of the racial problem, as being extremely localized in the state, and also the difficulty of building a broad base of informed support

for any program within the educational establishment. Most school committeemen and superintendents simply have no experience with the problems and feel no immediate need to face them.

4. The Effect of Time Constraints. We return to the influence of time constraints on school committee behavior. The questionnaires asked for estimates of time spent in various activities associated with collective bargaining and budget making process. Note that these two activities tend to be coincident, in that the bargaining agreement is supposed to be (but rarely is) reached prior to submission of the budget. Note also that these time commitments occur through the middle of the school year, away from the busyness of opening or closing or the summer vacation schedule; this is the time when the main work of leadership and pointing out new directions would ordinarily be expected to occur.

The average hours in these two activities is estimated at over 80; some respondents report twice that. If there is a difficult negotiation or a bond issue in the offing, or a resistance is organized on any front, it seems clear that the amount of work taken on is quite formidable. It is hardly surprising that the most frequent complaint voiced by school committeemen in interviews concerns how little time they are able to devote to what really interests them, which is the schools themselves.

This fact, coupled with the controversy, seems likely to contribute to a loss of interest on the part of incumbents. The time load is such that it cannot help but compete with such other interests as making a living, and it gives the growing realization that the problems are not really what one wanted to address, and that a lot of abuse comes with what used to be a position of prestige in the community.

That time is a constraint as seems indicated by the fact that it does not appear that committees with more new members spend more time on these issues, despite what would seem to be an obvious unfamiliarity. What we do find, however, is that the relatively inexperienced have significantly less confidence in the fact that the budget is based on facts, and they are more likely to have to request supple-

mental appropriations after collective bargaining, while senior committees tend to be able to adjust line items or to otherwise make it possible for the budget to absorb the settlement.

Of course, either of these aspects of newness invites more controversy, the latter because it presents a new public decision point and the former because it means the committee is less able to present a cogent, fact-based argument for its requirements. Danvers, which seems to be trying for a number of historic firsts in difficult town-school relations, recently produced a caricature of this phenomenon when a newly elected school committee induced the town meeting to reject the budget and collective bargaining agreement just submitted by its predecessor.

Thus, turnover tends to reinforce controversy and shift it toward the emotional end of a scale that reaches from a well reasoned cooperative search for truth to an open emotional conflict. Does it accomplish anything else? We cannot find any significant relationship between program or budget cuts and newness. This despite the fact that new members are more inclined to see major issues in this area, more inclined to bargain aggressively, more inclined to get along with municipal officials. In the three preceding years, most school program commitments have simply gone on with minimal changes. Newness does not lengthen teacher-pupil ratios, cut materials, lead to settlements seen as less advantageous by teachers, or otherwise produce a visible response. If the test of effectiveness of the democratic process is turnaround in spending in consequence of election of new members concerned with costs, then the process isn't working. Alternatively, if the test is that incumbents would be responsive to shifting community's priorities about as much as new members, the process is working, since there is a slight downward drift in programs offered. Whatever the case, as is obvious to anyone with familiarity with the problem, school budgets and programs have enormous built-in momemtum. It simply is extremely difficult to back away from past commitments, or to avoid paying a cost that is largely determined by factors outside the district's control. Turnover is producing more noise than substantive change.

What a heavy time commitment seems to produce is also

not substantive change, but an increased sense of fairness, trust and friendliness, and also a lower (!) tendency to cut the budget for materials and supplies. Except for this minor economic consequence, which is however one of great importance to teachers, the benefits as well as the burdens of a heavy time commitment and an effort to be responsive are principally psychological, not economic. Those who spend little time seem to attack that which is most easily attacked, and then move on without regard to consequences. It is particularly interesting to note that this behavior is seen most in the cities; in general, the larger the budget, the less time the school committee spends on it. This is probably due to a tendency, when dealing with large budgets, to go the route of requiring across the board cuts, if cuts appear required, leaving it to the administration to determine where they should be made. In smaller districts each separate item of proposed expenditure may provoke extended discussion.

Still, our impression, and it cannot be more than that, is that there is a great deal of constructive and searching change going on, this is taking place within a substantially constant real resource input framework. Many reasons are offered for this: young teachers of the new generation, student pressure, federal funds for experimentation, the impact of new ideas. We would like to suggest an additional cause. It has been long recognized that school committees tend on the whole to be establishmentarian and traditional, and that change and particularly experimentation or innovation are regarded as dangerous. It seems likely therefore that the pre-emption of their time and interest by other issues, plus a human desire to give a **quid pro quo** when it is necessary to reject almost anything that costs more money, has opended up the possibilities for teacher or staff-initiated change. There are fewer hassles, to use the current phrase, when someone wants to try something, because the hasslers tend to be fully occupied elsewhere.

This is certainly consistent with the idea that school committeemen induced change is **more** difficult, and we find flexible scheduling programs initiated by teachers and staff working well, and flexible scheduling initiated in a school committee working only with difficulty and with substantial teacher resistance. We suspect something of the same

phenomenon would be found of open campus plans. It is hard to imagine that anything so non-traditional would have been so widely tried were it not for economic pressure; we also suspect, however, that how well a particular plan is working depends on whether some teachers seized on it as an opportunity to do some things that ordinarly they would never have attempted, if all the ritual through all the channels had to be observed.

This is not as startling a conclusion as it might first appear. The last thing any self-starting employee wants is a boss with nothing to do.

This new openness to change makes the character of the administration, particularly superintendents and principals, be more critical than ever. At the present time, teaching jobs are scarce and security motivations can be expected to be strong. An administration can take advantage of the opportunity to initiate and/or support costless or cost-saving change, or alternatively, can tighten control and become more authoritarian. At some point, also, the administrators may become so exhausted or have their time so occupied, that they cannot make the relatively smaller required push to bring change about. Some of both cases can be found. In one instance, an interviewee spoke of his child and other students being, in his view as well as his child's, unreasonably suppressed in his school, but said, "I didn't make trouble because I knew they would get back at him." Another spoke of the same system as one where teachers "go along or go out." The pace of change indicates to us that many want it, but opportunity can clearly be rejected and in some cases is.

In another case, the superintendent of a system with many innovative concepts finally just gave up and abandoned a program that involved complex dealings with community people, various granting agencies and staff, and pushing their attempts to find viable programs through the school committee. The generally receptive, but new, school committee couldn't give such programs the attention priority that their educational promise deserved, but neither could they see themselves as rubber stamps. The result was simply to give the effort up.

5. State – Local Communication. We turn now to another problem, the degree of articulation between local systems and state agencies. Given that school committees and superintendents are both up against a time constraint in their efforts to cope with local issues in a framework of local priorities and resources, one would expect little upward communication or meaningful interaction for this reason alone. The questionnaire data confirm this expectation. School committee chairmen were given an assortment of 17 prospective or actual programs with which to register a range of reactions from strong disagreement to strong support. We found 72 instances of strong opposition, and 187 cases of strong support. On these issues, however, there were only 10 cases of communication by the superintendent or the committee with the Department of Education, and 64 with members of the General Court. Twenty-one of the communications with the General Court were on two issues where the state associations have made significant efforts to get out grass roots support – the minimum salary law and fiscal autonomy.

Some cases are particularly striking; for example, 21 of the 27 opposed tenure for principals, but only one had communicated that opposition to the General Court and none to the Department or the Board. Twenty-five supported alternatives to the property tax, but only seven communicated that to the General Court, and again, none to the Department or the Board, which had a committee working on the problem in the period covered by the question. If nothing else, the unevenness of the communication suggests that general conversation and dialogue are very rare; schoolmen do not sit down with legislators for open-ended discussions of their situations, despite the fact that education is a primary consumer of state resources.

Partly this is a manifestation of vigorous local autonomy; however, 17 supported statewide goals for education, but there were only three who communicated either support or opposition to the Department or the Board, despite the fact that this was a currently active program and the subject of some fairly forceful downward communication from the Board.

The discussions with outsiders that do take place seem to

be peer group discussions, and these are generally on specific points of mutual interest. Eleven of 26 school committee respondents, for example, discussed collective bargaining problems with other towns, and 21 made considerable use of data on cities or towns of the same size. One-half compared themselves frequently with other communities in terms of financial data, 12 of 26 made some effort to maintain a per pupil cost relationship, and 25 made some effort to keep teachers' salary costs in line with selected others.

This indicates what is called "pattern bargaining" in labor relationships, and a considerable degree of what economists call "conscious parallelism" in making budgetary decisions. In each case, the effect is a follow-the-leader style of decision-making, and it is seldom asked who the leader really is and whether he is right or wrong. In labor relations, the usual result is whipsawing whereby one party is hit hard on one issue where he may be weak or generous for other reasons, and then others are brought into line. Thus, currently, the very generous salary settlement in Cambridge appears as the teachers' demand in Lexington, and so forth.

In economics, conscious parallelism supported by conversations would violate the antitrust laws, as being the antithesis of healthy competition. Whether the analogies hold or not, it is evident that, on matters giving the school committees the most trouble, there is little support from the top down, in the sense of guidance on what ought to be. It is as if the only criterion of rightness, fairness, or rationality was either what one's neighbors were doing, or else a purely local assessment of a purely local situation. Interviews with school committeemen, negotiators and factfinders all confirm that the ability to pay of the particular city or town is a major consideration in salary determination. This is an interesting commentary on the equalization of financial potential that the state aid formula is supposed to provide.

Neither do we find much evidence of bottom-up support, in the sense of school committees commissioning local task forces to act as their agents. There is of course community involvement sponsored and occasionally required, but usually through the administration of the schools. When it comes to dealing with the schools themselves or with municipal government, where the staff cannot provide much support,

the committees seem to act on their own. Many hire professional negotiators from outside, but none delegate to interested citizens that role. (In one case, the professional negotiator is a former school committeeman, which seems to us to be a happy accident.) We know of at least one case where citizens are involved (with good effect) from the beginning in construction and evaluation of the budget, but this is more a support and credibility building effort than a delegation which conveys some sense that the committee at least expects the delegate to act in its behalf, and that it ordinarily will accept their recommendation. The concept of the delegation of power seems foreign to school committees; they do not create organizations to serve those needs they have, other than study needs, which inherently cannot be served by the professional staff. Neither do they seek help from the state, except in the matter of provision of data either to them or to their association.

Thus, they fail to take the most obvious step to deal with their own time constraint, which is to create a responsive organization to help share the load. The closest they come is in the hiring of professional negotiators for collective bargaining; this practice has other problems of its own, since it may tend to interfere with some possibly useful two-way communication between teachers and the community.

CHAPTER IV STRATEGIC CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of questionnaire data and interviews has gone far enough to permit some conclusions to be drawn that are relevant to strategy. These are of the nature of letting us see the forest for the trees. There are two types of conclusions; the first addresses the facts and the second introduces conceptual schemes required to give consistent meaning to the facts.

1. **The Situation Generalized**. First, school committees and superintendents are virtually overwhelmed by the requirements of a major task which they should not have to perform at all, if the thrust of recent court cases is accepted. That all-absorbing task is the attempt to adjust the level of the financial commitment to education to the resources of the local community (as opposed to making community input to a program whose economic parameters are determined by the priorities and resources of the state as a whole). Apart from the thrust of court decisions, the net effect seems to be an attempt to rationalize differences in the treatment of children based not on differences in them, but in their communities. This adjustment to local conditions is what is involved in budgets, school plant involvements and the economic issues in collective bargaining.

Second, there is reason to believe districts are becoming less capable of performing even this task well as time goes on, due to the fact that stress produces turnover; turnover reduces experience; less experience produces high fatigue levels, mistakes and simplistic approaches; and mistakes, fatigue and simplistic approaches cause still more stress and turnover, in both school committees and superintendents. Furthermore, the stress and controversy brings into the arena people who either accept it as a way of life or are manifesting the controversy in the agenda they bring.

Third, the *stickiness* of school budgets is such that there are neither major nor widespread changes occurring in the resource base for education in individual communities, (except that in many, the pupil to square feet of plant ratio is rising, especially at the high school level). However, since

there is no effective limit on the resources that might be justifiably devoted to education (Did Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip waste money on the education of Prince Charles?) conflict afflicts rich and poor communities alike, as all have tended to be moved by events to the threshold of their community's tolerance for property taxes. (Professor Milton Friedman once said to the present writer, *If your theory suggests that successful people are behaving in an economically irrational manner for a reasonably long period of time, it is far more likely that your theory is wrong.* In the matter of educational spending, some may wish to act on Professor Coleman's celebrated finding that cost doesn't correlate with educational outcomes; for our part, we prefer to believe that the thousands and generations of intelligent and successful families who at some sacrifice either sent their children to expensive private schools such as Andover or Exeter, or moved to communities with public education of exceptional cost and quality, were neither being hoodwinked nor consistently irrational.)

Fourth, the strategy of the state, which has been to share school costs on a basis of partially reimbursing expenditures voted locally, has done little if anything to resolve the issues or alter their character.

Fifth, the failure of the state aid formula system to resolve the issues or to equalize educational opportunity by any measure stems less from remediable weaknesses in the formula than from the tendency of school committees to base their judgments on what other communities, regarded subjectively as comparable, are doing. Even if the formula more than equalizes the fiscal potential of some, as is the case with some communities with high private school enrollments, poorer communities tend to think poor and do less, and wealthier communities tend to think rich and expect more.

Sixth, the combination of events seems for many communities to not prevent substantial changes in program character within a substantially constant resource base. We see no evidence that these changes might increase taxpayer support in the short run; it seems more often the case that they are the result of a lack of such support, as, for example, when a system makes program adjustments to an inadequate plant. A strategy of providing better schools on a fixed

resource base in order to improve financial support does not seem to promise near term success, although of course it may eventually have that effect.

Seventh, we find little evidence of strategic thinking at the district level. There are goals for education at the other end of the scale, but something of a vacuum in the middle. How will this particular system in this particular environment better move toward appropriate long run goals? The principal reason for this vacuum seems to be instability in that level of management whose responsibility it is to provide a strategy, to keep long run goals clearly in sight and adjust current behavior so that movement is directed and effective. Since the issues involve school-town or school-state relationships heavily, the needed strategy is heavily political. Making provision for orderly and directed long term change, or for taking steps to alter the environment or change the relationship of the organization to it, is the principal top management responsibility. That responsibility is now being borne by the least stable component in the system, the school committee, which does much to explain why there is so much crisis management, fire-fighting, or simple coping behavior; a strategy either does not exist or else is changed faster than the system could possibly respond.

Our generalized conclusion returns to the concepts of Lewin's force-field analysis. The problems are so widespread and self-reinforcing, so traceable to factors beyond the control of individual participants, and so conducive to drawing participants into the arena who for one reason or another cannot be expected to be able to solve the problems, that we conclude that the principal problems are environmental. Satisfactory solutions will not be found in changing the cast of characters, either by training or replacement, but by changing the environment in which they are asked to operate. Much of this environment is managerial, meaning it grows out of our institutional arrangements for provision of public education, and thus is subject to change. It is not simply a case of the times in which we live, which we cannot significantly affect, but of the way we have organized the state for the delivery of educational services.

2. A Conceptual Summary To organize all the various aspects of the public education enterprise so that they make consistent sense and a basis for recommendations requires the introduction of a conceptual scheme, a way of thinking about a sizable array of observed phenomena. To provide this we return to the concept of strategy and its implementation.

Strategy, it will be recalled, begins with an overall sense of mission or purpose, a concept of what the institution ought to be at some indefinite future period, perhaps a decade ahead. It then turns to an intermediate term plan that will get the institution from where it is to where it seeks to be. Current decisions, such as on annual budgets, programs, or projects, are then twisted, so that they contribute to the intermediate term goal that reflects the long term goal.

Given that the educational enterprise is notoriously slow to change and universally recognized to be in need of change, one would expect a need for heavy emphasis on strategic planning, and a heavy input of strategic considerations into short term decisions on how to use resources, people or time.

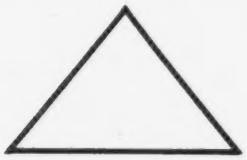
What we find is a virtual absence of strategic planning in the intermediate term sense. There is, as always, a great deal of talk about pedagogy, ideal education, education for the future, new needs and concepts, and so forth, but very little on how we move the system from where we are to where we want to be. This is true at the level of the school district and at the level of the state system as a whole.

One interviewee, speaking of a committee charged with a responsibility to produce change, said, *After all, they are only working for a free cup of coffee.* There are in Massachusetts perhaps a handful of people with the time, resources and devotion to work harder with year to year consistency for a free cup of coffee than most of us do for a living. Viewing the system as a whole, however, one would have to conclude that probably less than one-tenth of one percent of the people, time or money involved in public

education is devoted to how the system as a whole should and can be changed.

In organizational terms, making provision for a strategy and seeing to its implementation is a top mangagment role. This is not to say that top management actually does the strategic planning, but it sees to it that it is done, because without such planning, organizations drift, they over- or under-react to current stimuli, and they fail to coordinate the inputs of their constituent parts.

One way of looking at this is the *time span of discretion.* Professor Edmund P. Learned at Harvard University has used in lectures the inverse of the ordinary organizational pyramid to make the point. The usual pyramid with top management at the apex reflects span of control is as follows:



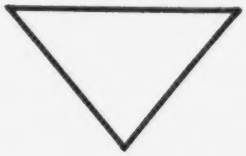
TOP MANAGEMENT
MIDDLE MANAGEMENT
LOWER MANAGEMENT
WORKERS

NUMBER OF PEOPLE
AFFECTED BY DECISIONS

Professor Learned draws beside it a time span of concerns and dec'sions:

TIME PERIOD RELEVANT
TO DECISIONS-YEARS

— TIME —



TOP MANAGEMENT
MIDDLE MANAGEMENT
LOWER MANAGEMENT
WORKERS

The concept of *time span of discretion* was developed and applied by Elliot Jacques in Great Britain, who used it as means for determining rank and salary in an organization.[1]

Numerous studies have shown that the proper time span for an organization to consider may not be the same as the

relevant time span used by the individuals in it. Management literature is full of examples of division managers in decentralized organizations making short run decisions that conformed to their period of evaluation for compensation or promotion, at the expense of long term considerations that would cause the company to be less well off.

In education, it is clear that the longest personal time span for any strategic decision is that of the career teacher, who may outlast generations of students, a handful of principals and superintendents, and dozens of school committee members. The shortest time span in the organization, except perhaps for the non-tenure teacher, is the school committee member, who increasingly is coming in to make some changes and then get out as soon as gracefully possible, certainly long before the full impact of his changes will be known. To that extent, he is like the division manager in a growing decentralized company who is gone before it is ever discovered what it is that he has really done.

Most decentralized organizations try to compensate for this tendency by providing detailed information flows, substantial personal interaction with knowledgeable staff, and sophisticated performance evaluation systems. The most common device is the management meeting, where managers at one level in an organization expose their plans and results to the scrutiny of their peers, their superiors, and staff specialists. In addition, the manager always faces the possibility that his past will catch up with him and he will be found out to have been not as good as was once thought. There is however nothing in the organization of public schools that performs this function. The professional manager deals with a lay board, the lay board deals with an electorate, and years and years may pass before the effects of decisions appear, and even then the causes may be clouded.

If there are areas in which decentralized decision making leads to consistent errors or to inappropriate decisions, those areas tend to be taken over by the next highest level of authority. Some of this has of course happened in public education; state certification of teachers is perhaps the clearest illustration.

At the higher level, the Board of Education also comes and goes, although less rapidly than school committees, as do

most legislators and the school committees with which they interact. What endures in the bureaucracy and a few indestructible legislators in key committee positions. Neither of these is answerable for consequences in proportion to the power to act or to not act that is possessed. (Legislators are of course answerable to their constituents, but in the state as in the federal government, it is rare that they are called to account for the way they meet committee responsibilities, except when their constituents are directly affected.) The most obvious source of ways to get things done – the long term legislator and the career civil servant – may or may not have a high personal stake in causing the system to be changed; whatever the case, it is virtually impossible for him to be held accountable.

What seems missing in the school enterprise as a whole is the rational provision for intermediate planning and subsequent implementation. There is apparently enough discussion of long term concepts and goals to serve that purpose, if the people involved felt they were really deciding something that would not only happen eventually but would affect what they were doing from now on. (There are some hard core problems that seem still unsolvable, in the light of current knowledge, such as how best to serve the culturally disadvantaged.) The major problem of most discussions of goals is that they seem academic or unrealistic or philosophical, and are hence approached with diffidence; this simply reflects the absence of a credible mechanism for implementing decisions that might be reached.

Two illustrations of the lack may be offered. The first concerns the Educational Goals for Massachusetts and the second the proposed changes in the state aid system. As is customary, the principal inputs were made by small groups of unpaid volunteers; to the extent they were served by staff, it was mainly on an over-load basis by an understaffed and underequipped Bureau of Research in the Department of Education. Nevertheless, recommendations emerged.

The implementation program for the goals seems to date to have been a highly directive letter to the districts asking superintendents to inform the Board as to how they intended to adapt, with community consultation, and achieve those goals. As we understand it, the response has been about what

might be expected from locally oriented managers responsible to another employer, and whose time is over-committed in day-to-day coping.

Implementation for the changes in the state aid formula consisted of submitting to the Legislature two alternatives from divided educational and municipal interests. (Incidentally, the submission was made in an election year where the outlook for favorable action on any such bill was considered very poor, but such was the timing of the reports.) Advocates of both bills attempted to build support in the districts, which tended to divide according to which bill favored them the most. Both worked through the Legislature, leaving the Governor's Office essentially uninformed.

What seems most important is that neither bill appeared to command the kind of support from anyone at the district level that one would expect for a matter of vital interest, a high priority item to be understood and pushed. Partly this is because the subject matter is technical, but it is not incomprehensible. It seems much more the case that there are few out there who conceive a major part of their job to be to attempt to modify the public school environment so that the institution can better meet its responsibilities. The closest thing to such a widespread organization is the League of Women Voters, and unfortunately the League and the educational interests were backing different horses on the issue. The possibilities for implementation seemed not to have been a factor in the adoption of the objective.

A major opportunity to force consideration of the issues was pre-empted by a career politician, who brought a suit in federal court on behalf of his son, alleging that the Massachusetts system discriminated against him, as a resident of Boston, on grounds of wealth. The suit was being prosecuted **pro bono publico** by two young attorneys attached to major firms and interested in furthering the sponsor's career. The disadvantage of this situation lies not so much in the political sponsorship, although that may cause a loss of psychological appeal, but in the virtual absence of any close tie from the beginning to those who either fully understood the problem or might know where solutions could be found. The major opportunity to compel change was jeopardized, or at least delayed, by the lack of a close tie

to any organization or entity with a major commitment to causing change.

In education, there is no middle-management, middle-time span organization that can effectively plan and carry out a program of change. The questionnaire and interview findings show school committees and superintendents are preoccipied with the next deadline – the budget, the collective bargaining agreement, the bond issue, living until the end of June. The Board of Education flings occasional thunderbolts from on high, but the Department of Education is not organized to integrate district level reaction and response from the lay leaders at the district level who correspond to the Board. The organization of the Department is around special mandates or functions or categorical grant programs; no one, except presumably the Commissioner, has a continuing responsibility for thinking about the totality, although an occasional study grant may stimulate a flurry.

Professors Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch note the existence of a creative tension between two general principles of management[2] One focuses attention on the need for central decisions for strategic or coordinative purposes, and the other calls for decisions to be made at the level closest to, and presumably best informed about, the real problems that exist where the organizations must come to terms with the outside world. The principles are clearly contradictory, and a viable organization must find a way to balance them and to shift emphasis from one to the other as the situation demands.

In the absence of articulation between the Board and the districts, the responsive shifting back and forth, or development of a clear concept of what should be done locally and what should be done centrally, never occurs as a planned response to an externally imposed need. Each of the two spheres of action tend to go on as if the other did not exist. Local control is a shibboleth, not an organizational relationship existing to serve identifiable purposes.

Here again the lack is evident of an organizational manifestation of the need for a middle-term strategic function, that can follow through on a strategic decision on the one hand, or affect that decision intelligently by providing inputs about the real problems, on the other.

Therefore, the Board doesn't offer solutions that are seen as solutions in the field, the field doesn't effectively say to the Board, *Look, here is where we need help,* and goals and current practices never come together.

The biggest weakness is that the district level top management is the most volatile, most rapidly changing element in the system, and there is no organizational structure or activity that compensates for that fact. The policy making function, the district level top management function, the function where the time span of decision should be longest, is performed by people with inherently short term outlooks, short term experience, and short term futures in the organization. They cannot commit their systems beyond a term of office, at most, and most members require about one-half a term simply to get on top of a limited concept of their job, much less gain familiarity with the strategic problems and considerations. There are, for example, few if any school committeemen, or superintendents for that matter, with the temerity to say they really understand the state aid formula. And given the problems of simply coping, we are not surprised that another Advisory Council study found the lack of long range planning, even with respect to resources, to be the greatest managerial weakness in school operations.[3]

This gap in organizational structure leading to and manifesting a gap in strategic planning for the achievement of a mission or the realization of a concept is what we would regard as the fundamental organizational weakness in public education. Our recommendations with respect to organization are aimed primarily at closing that gap, in the context of helping public education better to confront its current challenges.

However, it is well to recall here the injunction with which this study began. Structure must follow from strategy. Much of the lack addressed above is obvious to anyone who has dealt with education at the state level. We should however guard against the idea that there is some universal prescription, such as a long range planning department. What is required is an organization equipped to respond to particular strategic requirements. Meaningful recommendations will not emerge manuals on organization, but from a sense of what

the long term job is that the organization has to do and how that long term job differs from the present situation. For this reason, we turn now to a discussion of strategic requirements, and out subsequent recommendations will be drawn from the confrontation of the present situation with the needs.

CHAPTER V WHAT HAS THE STRATEGY BEEN?

1. The Traditional Concept of Public Education. To understand new challenges, it is first necessary to gain some historical perspective or understanding of what public education has tried to accomplish. In turn, when we think of goals or purposes, we are met at the outset with the question of whether, or in what sense, Massachusetts can be said to have a public education system at all, as opposed to simply an aggregation of over 400 local systems that, as one interviewee stated, "require attendance, not education."

Is there some rational view of the world that makes order out of seeming disorder, or is the pattern we see simply a Topsy-like growth? We believe there is a rationale of sorts and it is important to examine what it is, because that is where the most fundamental re-examination is occurring and must continue to occur.

First, regard education as a social investment, to be guided so as to maximize the return, and not a social service to which are all entitled or a pleasant experience to be enjoyed. This has strong elements of truth, in the fact that one primary justification for education as a public expenditure lies in its contribution to the stock of social capital and its contribution to productivity of the labor force, and that a second justification addresses the need of society for an informed electorate, etc., to serve its purposes.

Second, assume that the ability to benefit from education has close, if indirect, associations with wealth. Statistical studies certainly show this to be the case, given conventional measures of academic success and conventional definitions of what schools should do. Furthermore, if wealth entails responsibility as well as privilege, it seems both privately and publicly prudent to give more education to those who must bear the responsibility. That this and the preceding point do represent implicit assumptions on which a system is built is perhaps most evident in the case of higher education; no one questions the wisdom of past efforts here, even though the poor have traditionally been little represented.

Third, assume that society needs relatively few people – say, fifteen percent – with education beyond functional com-

petence in the basic components of literacy—an ability to read, to write, and to perform arithmetic operations; that social outcomes for individuals will be largely determined by qualities of character rather than formal training, and that for a person to not "take to schooling" is neither a stigma nor a severe handicap in later life. Emphasize moral instruction as a major purpose, serving both the public and individual interest. Measure educational quality in terms of what education traditionally does for the gifted, which is enhance and reward powers of abstract, symbolic, thinking and the ability to learn from printed material.

Fourth, assume that people of wealth and hence a high level of educational interest and ability tend to cluster together in separate cities or towns, or perhaps in separate sub-district neighborhoods, where more resources can be devoted to education; encourage this, since it means more resources will be used where the social productivity is highest, and less will be used where it is lowest.

Fifth, organize private charity to skim from the ranks of the poor those who, for one reason or another, show exceptional academic ability, and provide distinguished higher education opportunities for them; organize schooling around simply two options, (1) a post-secondary education, usually in the liberal arts or sciences, as preparation for a profession—especially teaching, law, medicine or the ministry—or (2) the fundamental literacy requirements necessary for citizenship and early and successful entry into numerous employments. Let the world of work be simple enough, and the out-of-school experiences of young people broad enough, so that the entry threshold for very many jobs is not high.

Sixth, believe that children should be kept out of the labor force, both for their own health and safety and to protect the jobs of those working. Rely on family discipline, neighborhood stability and ultimately police power, to maintain order among unemployed or truant youth. Assume that young people don't want to work unless they must or that any social-psychological need for usefulness can be met in the home.

Seventh, conclude that at all costs it is necessary to avoid shaping the young in ways that may be responsive to collectivist ideas, originating in either the left or the right, the

church or the state. Consider decentralization desirable for its own sake, to avoid the alternative.

Eighth, have cities and towns that are stable enough in their social composition to provide family and cultural continuity across the generations; assume that the communities will be family centered, and that parents and grandparents know what kind of education is best for their children and how it should be provided.

As a deduction from a set of facts or beliefs such as indicated above, the Massachusetts provision for public education makes consistent sense. In simpler times, in poorer times, in more stable times, it was a system that worked, whatever its shortcomings.

The above presumptions fit well with the concept of education as a social investment, and an educational system organized to further the purposes of society. Only incidentally if at all were the interests of the individual child or of children as a group to be benefited. The Constitution of Massachusetts makes clear this presumption:

> "Wisdom and knowledge, as well as virtue, diffused generally among the body of the people, being necessary for the preservation of their rights and liberties; and as these depend on spreading the opportunities and advantages of education in the various parts of the country, and among the different orders ofthe people, it shall be the duty of legislatures and magistrates, in all future periods of this commonwealth, to cherish the interests of literature and the sciences, and all seminaries of them; especially the university of Cambridge, public schools and grammar schools in the towns; to encourage private societies and public institutions, rewards and immunities, for the promotion of agriculture, arts, sciences, commerce, trades, manufacturers, and a natural history of the country; to countenance and inculcate the principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in their dealings; sincerity, good humor, and all social affections, and generous sentiments, among the people."

Viewed historically, the system cannot be considered a failure. It created an internationally respected cultural life with significant contributions in literature, music, and the arts and important institutions devoted to them. It created a leadership class and, for a time, the moral leadership of the entire country. It led to significant progress in the sciences, and leadership in the professions. If it has tended to reinforce those who were privileged, it also provided a significant opening of entry to that class for those who could and would play by its rules and meet its standards. For a long period of time, it produced a successful economy, compared to the rest of the country and the world. Last, but certainly not least, the Republic was preserved, as were the rights and liberties of the people.

One factor contributing to the stability of the system was a later physiological maturity, so that the release either by graduation or withdrawal from public education tended to be coincident with the psycho-physiological changes that accompany maturation. A tendency to leave school at physical maturation could provide what anthropologists called a "rite of passage" signifying entry into adulthood, and out of a dependency relationship that grows onerous as one matures. Put another way, schools dealt more with children, with their relatively greater malleability, and less with physiological adults, with their more complex needs for self-assertion and personal autonomy.[1] The schools, by and large, did not have to cope with the social-psychological jungle that characterizes the modern junior high school, much less with the type of young person one often finds in high schools today. To that extent they did, physical force was used to whatever extent seemed necessary.

2. Some Troubling Consequences. The traditional system, for all its advantages to society as a whole, has produced a number of consequences that plague us today. First, middle and upper class values permeated the education system, so that the acceptance of those values was virtually a prerequisite for even modest success in the system. Much recent literature analyzes the linkage between socio-economic status and educational achievement. The two seem inextricably related. Thus, an analysis of an immense sample of American

children listed its two principal conclusions (although referred to as hypotheses) as follows: [2]

> "**HYPOTHESIS 1 – The influence of the schools is bound up with the social background of the students that they get initially.** Very little influence of the schools can be separated from the social background of their students, and very little of the influence of social background can be separated from the influence of the schools. The schools, as they are currently constituted, produce more learning and foster greater motivation when they have a high proportion of students who: (1) come from the higher socio-economic strata rather than from the lower socio-economic strata; (2) have both parents in the home rather than only one or neither parent in the home; (3) are white or Oriental-American rather than Mexican-American, Puerto-Rican or Negro.
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> **HYPOTHESIS 2 – The social background of the students usually plays a greater independent role in the development of all school outcomes than do the independent influences of the school – until the twelfth grade.** At the twelfth grade the independent influence of the schools is greater than the independent influence of the student's social background for most of the motivational and attitudinal outcomes, but not for achievement.* What happens at the twelfth grade is that the influence of the student's social background for achievement still outweighs the school influence."

These conclusions should hardly be surprising: The schools were designed to produce the correlation, since they were designed to reward the characteristics and reinforce the social

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*Author's note: Consider however that by the 12th grade many of those with motivational or attitudinal problems who were enrolled earlier have dropped out, so a more appropriate comparison might be the total population of 12th grade age.

values associated with middle to high socio-economic status.* The desired qualities of mind, the norms of behavior, and the expected returns were all correlates of economic success and upward mobility.

Schooling was an investment, involving postponed gratification for future reward. Its key was discipline, preferably but not necessarily by one's self, toward the end of *industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in their dealings; sincerity, good humor and all social affections . . .*

This was the way to a successful life. That children should be happy in school was not a consideration; indeed, if they liked it, there was probably something wrong, because happiness was something to be earned as an ultimate reward, not enjoyed as a currently consumable right.

It is interesting to note that this long cultural heritage is today much less held by the elite, on the one hand, and by the "culturally deprived," on the other hand. The elite wants, increasingly, open learning styles, because they want their children to be happy, enthusiastic, self-directed and, in the current phrase, self-actualized. They are secure and confident in their belief that these attributes will enable their children to overcome any other difficulties, that if the children have a good attitude, they will learn what they need to know.

The culturally deprived (by definition?) have too few present satisfactions to play the game of postponed satisfaction and adherence to a set of values which have no relationships to their everyday experience, in an incomprehensible belief that it will someday pay off for them. Thus, the secure and confident and those who hold to their values tend to want open classrooms, while the very poor rebel against twelve years of the *sit down, be quiet, pay attention*

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*We use terms such as *middle class, elite,* and so forth because such is common usage; it is however important to remember that we use these terms to apply to systems of values, preferences and beliefs, which do not necessarily correspond in individual cases to income or to concepts of social strata. Rich or high status people may have upper, lower or middle class values, as may people of average or low income or social status.

alleged to be a preparation for socio-economic advancement. This coalition of the discontented, long observed in Great Britain, is a coalition against the middle, which has a different formula for a successful life. Both elite and deprived, for very different reasons, want education as consumption not investment, as a social service to be enjoyed here and now.

Other features of this system that served the past well that are significant today are the result of the fundamental attitude toward education as a reinforcer of socio-economically related values. As society became more integrated and communities more specialized with growth of mass transportation, it was clearly possible for some municipalities to develop a low or at best mixed commitment to education. The existence of high commitment communities implies the existence of low. Social class oriented schools were of little importance to communities that did not set great store by the class values asserted or rewarded.

This opened the way for the intrusion into education of other values, some of which were not at all related to the quality of education. For example, the use of schools for political patronage would never be tolerated in a community where education was widely seen as highly important, where each small step toward quality was eagerly sought. Only limited expectations would permit the development of school systems that did not staff with the best available people, but with people who needed jobs, or would provide neighborhood continuity for its own sake, or would be responsive to control and influence. We still find in Massachusetts, even in economically depressed areas, the idea that schools should *prepare the kids for life here,* not in the larger world to which the children may be able or forced to go. We also found, to our surprise, that the eight school committee members in our sample whose motive for running for office was alleged to be an interest in jobs for friends or relatives were not concentrated in the cities. The interest in patronage is related to wealth, not size of community.

Similarly, a mixed commitment reinforces the custodial aspects of education, the use of schools as a place to keep the children occupied so they would not enter the labor market.* These attitudes and behaviors are manifestations of a belief

that education beyond the three R's is not that all important for the type of children attending the schools. Once again, there is a certain rationality to the belief and its consequent behavior. Why should a system demand so much integrity to a value system when it offers so little return to the average child in such communities? Isn't the average child better off with C's and a well-adjusted personality and a wide range of interests, than with the B's of which he might be capable if he didn't do anything else? What were the returns beyond those associated with ordinary competence? If a handful do manage to go on to successful careers in and beyond higher education, the system can't be that bad; if, on the other hand, most people don't go on to distinguished careers, but nevertheless do survive in life, establish homes and families, and generally become responsible citizens, why do more? Situations that are comfortable with low expectations or estimates of need only become intolerable if there are rising expectations or high estimates of need.

Thus, the system developed into one that served society if not each individual in it. The state assured that some schooling was available to all. However, in a completely consistent fashion, individual communities were encouraged to do more if they were so disposed, if more conventional education served their needs, and they were able to find the means.

This attitude continues into the present. The principal strategy of the state has been to establish minimum standards of educational commitment, while encouraging local communities to do more; as previously observed, those that do more are those who hold the socio-economic values associated with success in education and who have the wealth to support more, and it is these whom the system has been

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*The recent spate of visits to the People's Republic of China has produced the interesting observation that pre-primary school children there not only go through the usual acculturation to social norms of schooling, but engage in periods of useful work for local factories or tend miniature farms. Compare our efforts to keep children socially or economically useless as long as possible.

designed to support. The simple rationale is that they have been the most efficient and effective users of educational services as conventionally provided and the schools, as conventionally run, have manifested their values.

Since communities vary widely in both their local property tax base and in their commitment to education, it is not surprising that the educational resources per pupil have come to vary greatly. Reimbursable expenditures–basically, local school revenues and general state aid to education–averaged $787 in 1971. The standard deviation of expenditures was $150, meaning, roughly, that 75% of the towns spent within the range of $637 to $937, per pupil, and 25% of the cities or towns spent outside that range; the following table shows the distribution.

TABLE I

REIMBURSABLE EXPENDITURES PER PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILD, 1971

$ Per Pupil	No. of Towns
0 – $599	4*
600 – $699	20
700 – $799	86
800 – $899	130
900 – $999	57
1,000 – $1,500	26

*Note: In some cases, substantial federal funds supported general educational purposes, and these are not included in reimbursable expenditures.

Source: Department of Education: Analysis of State Aid, 1970-71

The average local tax rate devoted to schools was reported as $24 thousand of equalized valuation. The standard deviation of the tax rate was $7.32, indicating the variation in burden borne by the various cities and towns.

Comparable ranges are found in almost any educational indicator. Reported pupil/teacher ratios ranged from over 30:1 to less than 16:1. The rate of college attending is over

80% in some districts, below 30% in others. Pedagogy ranges from full openness of classrooms to the most traditional of self-contained classroom instruction. The educational and administrative climate ranges from shape up or ship out repressive to an almost standardless permissiveness. It is quite clear that neither input nor output, neither size nor depth nor quality of programs, reveal any "system" in the state as a whole that had uniformity or equality of application as one of its goals.

The decentralization has been virtually total, and the units to which the delegation has been made are determined largely by other than educational considerations. They vary in size from a dozen or fewer pupils to almost 100,000. The idea of "one man, one vote" has no meaning at all in school affairs, since that one vote may be 1/100th or one millionth of the controlling electorate.

3. The Old System No Longer Tenable. All this discussion of social values and their consequences becomes germane for the simple reason that the consequences are no longer acceptable, and the fact that they are no longer acceptable is a major environmental change. Schools can no longer serve such a narrow concept of ends or means, supported by a take it or leave it attitude toward those whom the purpose does not fit. Today's young people will not accept it, neither will increasing numbers of their parents; neither the state nor the federal government can tolerate the failure rate that has resulted, simply on grounds of the resulting social cost in violence and alienation. Racial minorities, supported by the courts, will not accept discrimination based on race or on the poverty that has accompanied racial discrimination. Add to this the increased need for trainability and productivity in the labor force, in view of increased international and inter-state competition, and a growing unwillingness to spend either time or money on an education that is not producing results. Clearly, the old system has had to change, and change is occurring, albeit unevenly.

We distill from this general unacceptability of conditions two major interrelated needs that require current attention. The first is to equalize educational opportunity, to eliminate the discrimination in educational resources available on

grounds of differences in wealth that has come to characterize the system. The second is to foster diversity in educational concepts and services, to the end that public schools can appropriately serve all children, not simply those who come prepared and equipped to prosper in the traditional learning environment. Each of these will be discussed in the following chapter.

In general, these are not at odds with the priorities established by the Board in *The Results Approach to Education and Educational Imperatives.* It will however be evident that our statement of needs does modify some of the points made in that document, as a result of our analysis of the issues posed.

CHAPTER VI SPECIFIC STRATEGIC REQUIREMENTS

1. The Failure of Incentives to Equalize. Concern for inequality of educational opportunity has been a feature of public education in Massachusetts at least since the publication of the Willis-Harrington Report in 1965.[1] That report began by emphasizing the "two worlds of Massachusetts," in educational and other respects, with the differences being based largely on differences in wealth. It anticipates later reports in suggesting a connection between a low commitment to education and a high incidence of crime and disorder. It concludes, at page 421, by stating that *A vigorous program of expansion and growth in educational opportunities for all people in the state must be undertaken without delay.*

However, without appearing to recognize the inconsistency, that report suggests that equalization can result from a system which pulls up the lowest commitment communities to a minimum, while encouraging others with the means and the capability to run as far ahead as possible. This is the incentive system implemented in the state aid formula, which provides more reimbursement to otherwise equal communities if they spend more. There is of course an element of progressivity in the system, in that poorer communities are entitled to a higher reimbursement rate for any given level of expenditures than are richer communities. However, communities that are the same in terms of their property tax base may spend as much or as little as they wish, within fairly broad limits.

Numerous factors have interfered with the working of the state aid formula, in the sense of preventing its having the effect of equalizing the ability of different cities and towns to spend for public education. Principal among these are the minimum limits to the level of reimbursement, the attempt to get indirect aid for either private schools or older, larger cities (the two tend to come together), and chronic underfunding of entitlements. Furthermore, other municipal expenses may be high or low, affecting the ability of the city or town to spend for education.

However, what seems to be most important is the fact that

incentives apparently have not operated to cause resources to be equalized. We examined, as have others, the dispersion of expenditures per pupil, and there does not appear to be any convergence of spending per pupil since the state aid formula was introduced and up through the year it was fully funded. Thus, the organizational decision to have local control over the level of commitment, given the character of the times, vitiated any policy decision that the resources devoted to education should tend toward equality. Although state aid may contribute to tax equity, equalizing the ability to support schools does not equalize the support actually given.*

One need not speculate excessively over why this should be so. Wealthy communities and people will tend to spend more for education, other things being equal, just as they will tend to spend more for clothing, automobiles, food, and other products and services. Furthermore, education as conventionally offered has both a higher payoff and a better fit with expectations for the well-to-do than for the poor. To the extent that the wealthy live in communities where other municipal costs are low, the higher commitment is that much easier. Given the tendency of local school committees to set the level of commitment in terms of what socio-economically similar communities are doing, the effect of state aid is more on the comparative tax rate than on relative per pupil spending levels.

It is quite clear that a system based on incentives and local control will not equate anything that is germane to children, even though it might produce less dispersion than would otherwise be the case. It might equalize the financial potential of most districts to support a particular level of per pupil expenditures with a given tax rate, but that is a merely hypothetical equalization from the standpoint of the children. Their service level is related to what the district does spend, not to what it might if it taxed at a specified rate.

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*In the terms of formal economic analysis, the *income effect* of differences in wealth on the amount of educational services demanded outweighs the *price effect* of the state aid formula, which makes the services cheaper.

We regard it as highly likely that this same result would still be observed at differing levels of state aid, so that if the state were to undertake to finance a higher percentage of school costs, under the same basis as exists at present, the same differences in commitment would persist. Apparently, this idea is not widely accepted, as many seem to think more state funding would equalize district spending. We see little evidence for that view, and considerable that opposes it. We were able to test the idea because the definition of wealth for purposes of calculating state aid actually involves treating communities with the same public school burden very differently; those otherwise equal districts with high private school enrollments are treated far more generously than those with low private school enrollments. What the statistical analysis showed was that the percentage of children in private school had no effect on the level of commitment to public schools, despite the fact that the true level of aid was significantly more generous for a community with high private school attendance. This is simply one more indication of support for the belief that equalization of educational opportunity cannot be expected to occur as a result of volunteerism and incentives, but must result from other programs. State aid to education is much more a tax equity and tax relief measure than an educational equity measure.

Massachusetts must accept the realization that it has done little to equalize opportunity in any sense – dollar input, real resource input, or qualitative output. That the range of commitment is not greater than it is is in all probability due to the urban dynamics of the development of the state, and to the fact that school committees are to some extent influenced by what neighboring or peer communities are doing.

By *urban dynamics* we refer to the fact that people's locational decisions are affected by schools, as part of a total amenity package offered by a town.[2] Good schools and child-raising environments attract the children of the mobile, forcing costs up and taxes out of line; Lexington, for example, has about 30% of its population in public schools. Poor schools repel children, to that extent lowering costs and taxes; Boston, though probably not as bad as all that, has less

than 15% of its population in public schools. The two tendencies tend to stabilize at tax and school and other service levels that stop further movement of people between them. At that point, costs and commitment to schools are closer than they would have been had there been some barrier preventing the movement of people between them. Thus, the fact that in Massachusetts there tend to be many small communities within commuting distance of any given point has tended to hold commitment levels together to some extent, while socio-economic differences between them have driven commitment levels apart. Add to this the fact that the range of possible resource commitments is limited, and costs are market-determined; there is a minimum number of teachers required under almost any standard, and the salary level will be affected by inter-district comparisons. All these are something of market mechanisms, and the resulting degree of equality or inequality is less the result of state policy than of its absence.

It is our belief that this situation must in the next decade inevitably and at long last change. There are two reasons. The first is a growing line of court decisions that address the problem of inequality of educational opportunity due to differences in wealth directly, and find it violates the equal protection of the laws provisions of the Constitution. The second reason is related; the growing series of court orders to eliminate discrimination based on race. The latter decisions have tended to enforce school homogenization by busing or other mechanisms. The threat of this has produced friends for educational quality in hardcore poverty areas that such areas never knew they had. Thus, there is growing support for improving quality in the poorest schools as a way of forestalling the alternative. If those who want equality for its own sake are joined by the hypocrites who want it for the wrong reason, a convincing majority should result. The only thing that could prevent action is an immense capacity for inaction, which of course characterizes complex power structures facing complex issues.

2. What Does Equality of Educational Opportunity Mean? It clearly does not mean educational output or results; courts specifically and properly reject this as being non-

justiciable. We reject it also, on the grounds that it is incompatible with necessary diversity and the range of options required to meet the needs of different kinds of children who may be clustered in different communities. It is conceivable that this concept might be coupled with others, to read *equal outcomes for equal children making identical choices among equal options.* Even that most comprehensive goal has however the disadvantage of tending to freeze and homogenize the program offerings, the assessment of children, and the measures of results, at a time when all these features require development and change.

Second, equality of opportunity cannot mean equality of fiscal potential, which is the hypothetical goal – not approached in practice – of the state aid formula, for the simple reason that equalized financial potential will not equalize anything for children. *Equal fiscal potential* means the ability to raise the same number of dollars per pupil from the same local property tax rate on equalized value. If all communities spent the same amount per pupil, equal fiscal potential would be a useful device for attaining one limited concept of tax equity. It is therefore relevant to any discussion of appropriate revenue measures. However, there is nothing that leads us to believe that communities as disparate as those in Massachusetts would elect to spend the same amount per pupil, or anything approaching it.

There are some who argue that the court decisions require only equal fiscal potential, as if the fundamental right at interest was the right of the taxpayers in the school districts, not the right of the children to equal opportunity. That may be all that the present cases do imply, but if so, there will be other cases, or else courts will retain jurisdiction to see if the remedy eliminates the inequity. If it does not, and it clearly will not, other orders are sure to follow.

Third, equality cannot mean equal dollars per pupil. Cost levels for any given program level vary widely between Massachusetts communities; this is mainly due to differences in median salaries, which in turn tend to vary with the average seniority of the teaching staff, and this in turn seems largely determined by whether the particular system has been a high growth area or not. The actual educational services deliverable for any given amount of dollars per pupil

probably vary by 50%, from lowest to highest, since median salaries vary that much and more. Equal dollars would tend to produce highly unequal opportunity, and particularly for those in the cities, where salary scales and seniority of staff tend to be higher than average, and other costs may also be high.

By elimination, then, we are left with equalization meaning resource input. Otherwise equal children should have access to approximately the same level of professional and other staffing, support materials and services, and building quality, or at least substantially equivalent combinations of these things. (It should be recognized that different educational inputs may to some extent be substituted for each other.) We regard it as inevitable that this is the criterion which will come to be accepted, for lack of any other that withstands analysis. The only question is whether it will be necessary or desirable to go beyond this, and attempt to equalize peer group influences by homogenizing the student bodies, which is of course a far more explosive issue than mere resource equalization.

The criterion of resource equalization is perfectly compatible with different children receiving different levels of support, just as they do now. For example, no one sees a Constitutional issue in having high school children receive more services than elementary school children, vocational students more than those in academic programs, or children with disabilities, including cultural disadvantage, more than those without them.

It is unclear at present the extent to which federal policy will continue to try compensatory educational expenditures as a means to overcoming a peer group disadvantage. Our suspicion is that it will, because of the social and logistical problems of substantial peer group mixing, and because putting disparate groups into the same school is often not enough to insure that they will in fact mix. However, a relatively small amount of categorical aid can do a great deal of good if the resource base is otherwise equalized. If, for example, 20% of the pupils are determined to be disadvantaged, only 5% of total educational funding devoted through categorical grants to their special needs would increase

resources available to them to 26% over an otherwise equalized base.*

3. The State Aid Approach Alone Will Not Be Sufficient. If equality of educational opportunity is truly a goal of the state, much of the activity carried on in its name by both the educational organizations (principally under the aegis of the Massachusetts Educational Conference Board) and the Department or Board of Education has been mis-labelled and mis-directed. Both produced changes in the state aid formula in bills intended to equalize fiscal ability. The major differences between the two as they were introduced were (1) an inclusion in the bill growing out of the work of a committee sponsored by the Department of Education of a general municipal aid factor, and (2) a higher proposed reimbursement rate for local school expenditures in the bill proposal by the Conference Board.

Both of these are fiscal measures aimed at hypothetical equalization of ability to pay. Putting their coefficients into a computer and simulating the effects over time of how they would affect state aid to education in various districts revealed the following:*

a) Neither bill would equalize fiscal potential, since many communities with high tax bases would have to receive negative aid, that is, would have to pay school taxes to the state at the proposed funding level, for that result to occur, and neither bill comtemplated this.

b) Neither bill would equalize fiscal potential of communities with the same tax base and public school burden, because both present law and the proposals gave

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*These conclusions are drawn principally from the work of Charles Stabell and his associates, cited in the Preface.

*Consider a district with 1,000 pupils, total costs of $1,000 per pupil, and a total budget of $1,000,000. If 80% of the pupils receive $950 per pupil, the remaining 20% receive $1,200, or 26% more; 200 pupils times $1,200 per pupil, plus 800 pupils times $950 per pupil equals $1,000,000.

favorable treatment to communities with high private school enrollments.

c) Neither bill would break the connection of local school decision making to the wealth of the local community, if only because the reimbursement entitlement associated with any decision to spend or not to spend could not be predicted, and neither, with greater force, could the actual funding level of entitlements.

d) Neither bill addressed the fact of cost differences between school systems for any given level of educational resource input.

e) Neither bill addressed in any substantial way the problem of low-commitment communities; the bill originating in the Department's committee made a weak attempt in this direction, but a prediction of the consequences of that feature showed it to be virtually insignificant in its results.

f) Neither bill had any basis for presumption concerning what local communities might do with additional school aid, where the disposition of such aid might range all the way from being totally given to tax relief to totally allocated to school program enrichment. For this reason, neither bill could be accompanied by an accurate forecast of either its cost or its benefit to children, since entitlements in the future depend on future spending decisions.

The general conclusion seems inescapable that what the approach shared in the two contending bills did is attempt to address the problem of property tax relief, with only the implicit hope that this would do something to actually equalize the educational resources available to children.

The reason this approach seems to be favored is in part the desire to avoid adding to the burden of the poorer community. It is also the apparent need to protect and encourage those who can and want to make an exceptionally heavy commitment, even though their spending levels cannot be equalled throughout the state and even though their

spending is largely only a reflection of their greater than average wealth. It is as if we were trying to equalize incomes without taxing the rich or insuring that the poor get more.

The two bills are at present being negotiated toward a consensus position, which will doubtless improve the chances for passage of some more liberal measure. Granting that the degree of equity in a tax or revenue sharing system is always a subjective matter of opinion, it seems likely that the result will be a system more widely accepted as being more fair. The fairness is however fairness to taypayers, which may but will not necessarily produce more fairness for children. We will still have not resolved the problem of the wealthy getting more service and the poor getting less, because the reliance is still on incentives, to which the wealthy are more responsive.

This is the dilemma the state has sought to avoid by putting its goals in terms of fiscal potential rather than program reality. Unfortunatley, there is a self-delusional quality about such efforts, in that people come to think they are attacking a problem which in fact they are substantially ignoring.

Compare, for example, the approach of the federal government in its confrontation with exactly the same issue, except that its scope was limited to equality between schools in a single district, not between districts. The regulations evolved to insure eligibility to receive federal funds are couched in terms of real resources – substantially the same number of teachers, the same materials and supplies budget and so forth. Schools in neighborhoods with wealthy or high commitment people are not encouraged to do more; they are to all intents and purposes prohibited from doing more unless of course they are able to lead the whole community to adopt a higher level of support.

This is exactly the opposite of the incentives in the Massachusetts statewide system, as expressed in the Willis-Harrington Report and endorsed by the Board of Education as recently as 1971. In the state system, the incentives given to those with high interest in education are to move to a high commitment community, and aided by the policies of the state, to pull away from the norm and to defend at all costs the right of one's community to do so.

The dilemmas and inconsistencies of equality meaning one

thing within a district and another between districts, and of pursuing equality while encouraging high commitment by the wealthy and permitting low commitment by whomever has it for whatever reason, must be faced and resolved. As of this writing, they seem to be substantially ignored. This is one strategic challenge that may not only present problems, but also opportunities for meaningful problem solving in the area of organization and governance.

It does seem, however, that the burden of proof now lies on those who defend the present system. If Massachusetts has a system of public education, in any meaningful sense of the word *system*, it is hard in today's world to justify the substantial differences in resources available to children that characterize the present situation.

4. **Diversification and Options as a Goal**. If public education is going truly to attempt to serve all the young poeple, it needs a much more extensive set of tools with which to work. Too much of the discussion of objectives of education seems to regard the experience as being similar to public vaccination against the specific disease of illiteracy; what is needed is more like comprehensive medical care. It seems at this time to be more necessary than ever for educators and all those concerned with young people to go back to the beginning and ask once again what posture adult society wishes to present to the upcoming generation. Schools have addressed too few of the needs of too few of the people.

If young people are bored, aimless or alienated in substantial numbers, it becomes necessary to think through – and to listen – to find out what kind of experience might be offered that would integrate them into society, rather than alienate them from it. When one looks at young people, on the one hand, and public schools on the other, one cannot help but be struck by how few the prescriptions are that the latter offers to meet an enormous range of needs held by the former. Children are vastly more diverse than the institutions we require them to attend. The consequence is that the child fits or doesn't fit, has a good experience or a mediocre to bad one, and leaves having a positive sense of what the future offers or a negative one.

The challenge to provide diversity is one sense the

equivalent of the often professed goal of providing individuation, a development experience suited to the needs of each individual child. However, there is more to it than that, because a diverse system is more than a collection of public schools offering individualized instruction. Some should emphasize a role as a leader in involving community resources in the integration of young people into society by job placement and training. Each institution needs to re-examine its stereotyped role and ask what its local environment really presents as a total challenge. In times of economic stress, there is a strong temptation to pull back to a minimal concept of role, a safe *numbers of students processed* concept.

Actually, by industrial standards, teachers appear already to be highly productive. The work of pupils varies from hour to hour and day to day and between individuals in a group; in such a work situation in industry, it would be unusual to find one supervisor directly in charge of the work of as many as 25 or 30 presumably trained and mature adults, much less young apprentices. Perhaps it is more to the point to say that many seem to regard children as objects being worked on, rather than as individuals engaged in work. If that happens in public education, it is an admission of defeat, and schools will become simple literacy factories. The burden and challenge of meeting the needs of young people for acculturation will pass to others; alternatively, the need will not be met, and our society will to that extent lose control over its destiny.

The need for diversity can sometimes be lost in a discussion of the need for equality of opportunity. For example, some advocates for the disadvantaged point to the fact that those not disadvantaged receive academic programs with vastly more content and upward mobile potential. That, however, misses the point. The real question is, what kind of program does the son or daughter of a well-to-do person receive, if that child for some reason has the kind of learning problems so often found among children from disadvantaged backgrounds? The answer is that the well-to-do child has options which enable him or her to find a school experience that fits his or her needs, in the form of private education or as a result of his parents moving to an appropriate

neighborhood. In most cases this is not a conventional academic program of whatever quality. What the fortunate ones who are both bright and well-to-do have is conventional academic quality; what those who are well-to-do but unable to cope with conventional quality can have, if their parents are sensitive to the need, is a choice of programs and innumerable supplementary activities and psychological support activities that do as much as possible to insure that the child sees what is true, namely, that he still has a good chance to be integrated into society and find a satisfying life.

Much of what seems to be happening in the leading systems of today is the generation of options. This represents a subtle and interesting change in the role of a school committee, which has traditionally determined the character of education to be offered; now, the role is more comprehensive, to see to it that educational experiences of various characters are offered and given reasonably equal support and treatment. As an elementary example, such school committees no longer decide for or against sex education; they offer it on the basis of parental consent. This is a very different matter than the traditional decision as to whether all children should or should not receive some such particular learning experience in the schools.

This process becomes even more interesting in communities that attempt to take a comprehensive view of the needs of youth. What can schools do for drug-addicted young people? (We know of none that makes a serious effort; we had heard of some that regard it as simply a police problem.) What should a community do with dropouts? What should it do with the bored genius or the frustrated IQ of 80 or 90? What about the bright child who cannot read? If, as Kenneth Boulding once remarked, *What a society really produces is people*, what kind of people are we producing? How can we take them as we find them and help and support them, rather than simply offering them a mold into which to fit?

To move from relatively monolithic to highly diverse is clearly necessary, and presents an enormous challenge, but only by so doing will it be possible to meet the educational and developmental needs of all. Given the complexity of today's society, only by the generation of meaningful options for both in-school and out-of-school learning and other

personal growth experiences, will it be possible for the current adult generation to say to all young people that there is in fact a place for them. Any level of quality, or equality without choice, would inevitably be tyranny for some.

Simply to offer options is not enough, however, because so often the option chosen proves to be an unsatisfactory blind alley. For example, many people avoid vocational education, and are encouraged by their parents and teachers to avoid it, since it seems to preclude the possibility of college, even though the young person would be much happier in a well-conceived program. But if the educational system and its constituent programs were sound, there would be no dead ends, there would always be a way back. The need is to provide adaptive skills and opportunities, ways for lateral movement with a minimal setback if a chosen activity does not later in life hold the promise or interest that it did earlier. It seems simply to be a matter of common sense to try to design a system in which a young person could follow his interest and benefit from his enthusiasm without paying too high a price if his judgment proves to be wrong. So while we need options, we also need crosswalks, ways to move from one option to the next without prejudice.

Public higher education is addressing this need, particularly in the regional community colleges. However, it is obviously inefficient for both individuals and for society to require post-secondary educational experiences to do jobs that could be done in secondary schools, or, for that matter, for secondary schools to solve problems that could have been taken care of in elementary school. To the extent possible, any alternative that forces a choice on a young person should have an associated way back to another alternative. When attractive but possibly risky choices are seen to be less irrevocable, they will be more widely chosen, and there will be a greater tendency of children to find the kind of experience appropriate for them at any point in time. In the absence of any sure way to know the potential of a child or the places society may offer him, this is the best we can hope to do.

5. Teachers and Diversity. Of course, teachers are also diverse, and they have somewhat the same need for a learning

environment that is congenial to them that children need. Failure to realize this and accommodate it is perhaps the greatest obstacle to generating change and options for children. Teachers, secure in their jobs, will not adopt styles that are unnatural for them; even if heroic efforts are made to induce or order them to do so, they will prevent or subvert changes they cannot implement. We believe (as does Lady Plowden) that it is significant that the greatest changes in pedagogy in the early grades have come in Great Britain, where each teacher has by law total discretion concerning how he or she teaches. Those who could do open classroom instruction did, those who could not, did not, but neither did they impose any substantial restraint on those who could. The assumption is that teaching and learning are a matter of individual agreement and rapport between teacher and learner, in which neither is asked to do what he cannot naturally be expected to do.

If the British experience is relevant, it may well be that to achieve diversity requires less effort to impose change and more a simple letting go, a freeing up of teachers to respond to the needs they see in the best way they can. Those who can generate meaningful options will, and those who can't are beyond control in any event. Certainly, this is not inconsistent with system wide staff support, joint curriculum planning, common goals or any of the other manifestations of top-down authority structures. The only difference is a greater congruence with the organizational reality that teachers cannot be forced to do effectively what they feel is the wrong thing attempted in the wrong way.

Changes such as the above are already starting to happen in many school districts in Massachusetts, despite the financial problems and the general difficulties of opposition to anything that is not straight and narrow, tried and true. Also, in many communities, it has been pointed out to young people that the character of their response to their opportunities will determine whether they have more of them or less. There is probably more truth in that than is intended, because the statement is usually issued as a warning. The real payoff will come when some community comes to the realization that it is turning out children – producing people – better than it thought it was. That might not be soon

enough to build support where it is lagging, but the eventual satisfactions will be great.

It should be pointed out in passing that a goal of diversity poses some serious challenges to those who would want to systematize education beyond its present level. If all that public education tried to do was, for example, assure age-in-grade attainment levels in basic skills, it is relatively easy to measure effectiveness and not much more difficult to obtain statistically meaningful bases for comparison of effectiveness between school systems and over time. If public education has a broader mission, and if that mission may vary substantially from situation to situation, the problem becomes immensely more difficult. Not only that, but the effort to develop and apply universal measures of effectiveness may cause an unwanted shift of goals toward achieving good marks on those measures, even if they are regarded as inappropriate. Simplistic applications of systems analysis could set education back to the days when what schools did was prepare children to take certain tests. Accepting the challenge of diversity moves the lesser challenge of inefficiency and cost-effectiveness to a higher level of abstraction. It will be necessary to develop other measures, or perhaps other means of reassurance for the public of management effectiveness.

6. Diversity and Administration. The principal administrative implication of a need for diversity of service is a need for decentralization of educational decision-making. The justification for decentralization is the need to put decisions organizationally close to the market which should shape the decisions. In the most obvious case, it requires substantial local input into program, staff selection and utilization, and particulars of role and mission. Whatever is done in the name of equalization should not be done at the price of homogenization, just as the goal of diversity should not provide an excuse for inequality.

There is little reason to believe, however, that the present political subdivisions of the state and their present powers with respect to schools represent the optimum form and extent of decentralization. Particularly, there is no implication that the goals of decentralization are met in sufficient

degree by the institution of local school committees, especially if the committees themselves represent diverse districts but attempt highly centralized direction of the schools under their supervision. What is clearly implied is that, at the extreme, the French situation is to be avoided, in which someone in Paris supposedly knows what every schoolchild in France is doing at 11:00 a.m. on any given day.

The test of effectiveness of a policy of decentralization is how well it works to produce needed local adaptations and responses, while maintaining adherence to some overall concepts of efficiency and effectiveness. Properly administered, it is a spur to accomplishment, not a license to take life easy. Since in education the goals themselves may vary substantially from situation to situation, an effective policy of decentralization requires very sophisticated management, in order to achieve reasonable assurance of overall effectiveness when diverse goals are sought in diverse situations. The recommendations which follow will need to address this problem, in a manner consistent with a policy of equalization, a policy of diversification, and a need for economic and educational efficiency.

The goals of equal opportunity and of diversity are simply current manifestations of treasured American values. Equality under the law is the essence of justice, and the ability to choose between meaningful options is the essence of freedom. Reasonably equal opportunity is a prerequisite of reasonably equal choices, and equal opportunity without choice is a contradiction in terms, given the diveristy of needs. It is in some ways surprising that it should have taken us so long to extend these values to children in public education, but to do so is the challenge of the years ahead. We turn now to the question of how to move toward these goals and at the same time to make our provisions for governance more successful.

CHAPTER VII RECOMMENDATIONS

I. General Considerations. Stephen K. Bailey writes of a superintendent's job today as follows:[1]

> . . . whether a superintendent can in fact enter into meaningful educational planning depends as much upon his political acumen as upon his moral vision. Unless he has the tact, the power of persuasion, the political savvy to involve constructively his board, his principals, the teachers, parents, students, mass media, interest groups, universities, other social agencies of government, federal and state officials, private philanthropy, and contending forces of civic passion, he might as well have stood in bed. We find that modern educational planning tends to be a contact sport. It is not drawing designs for auditoriums and gymnasiums (although that is part of it); it is not determining how teachers are to be assigned and utilized (although that too is part of it); it is not remaking the curriculum (although that too is involved). It is, instead, a form of social combat in which myriad interests are struggling over the fate of their proudest possessions: children, status, income, autonomy. Victory goes, as it always goes in politics, to the great resource-aggregators and the great combiners – those who have the catalytic knack and the Midas touch; who know the trick of discovering or of manufacturing uncommon commonalities (common purposes with an exciting edge). Educational planners in these terms are as scarce as hen's teeth, and our colleges and universities are doing virtually nothing to insure that America will have a goodly supply in the years to come.

The argument of this study and of the following recommendations is (1) that it is a major error to structure an organization in ways such that it needs to be staffed by

numerous virtual supermen, scarce as hen's teeth, in order to be successful; (2) that this is in fact what Massachusetts has done in its provisions for public education; (3) that therefore the principal means for improvement in governance lie in redefining the job so that it can be more adequately performed by the kind of ordinary (actually quite high) ability mortals one finds in superintendencies and school committees, without losing the benefit of truly exceptional leadership qualities wherever they can be found; (4) that one way to do this is to simplify the local district's tasks by taking some of its most difficult, time consuming and frustrating decisions out of its hands, and (5) that another way to do this is to economize the truly scarce qualities of genius, by giving them further reach and supplementing them or providing substitutes for them in group processes.

Bailey apparently agrees in substantial part with this emphasis on changing the conditions of work, for on the page following the previous quotation, he states the following:

> How do we maintain adequate contact with local, state and federal politicians, and with local, state, and national governments, interest groups, and professional associations, capable of helping us to aggregate needed resources and expertise?
>
> . . . No more important item exists . . . for the viability of local and area educational planning depends so largely upon what happens to educational planning at higher levels of government. Standards, constraints, and inducements are set by state governments and by the national government. Unless laws and administrative guidelines are fashioned at these higher levels as to what constitutes "good education," and how resources can be equitably distributed to achieve it, the best laid plans of local superintendents (whether they be mice or men) will go awry – if, in fact, they go any place at all.

How is the job to be made more manageable? The answer here must be phrased in terms of strategic requirements on the one hand, and those aspects of the job that

seem most unmanageable, on the other. One such strategic requirement is equalization of opportunity and one such unmanageable problem is the budget issue, when handled in the context provided by such factors as wide latitude in local levels of commitment, heavy reliance on local property taxes, collective bargaining without meaningful policy guidance, and a continuing drain of resources into inflation. The strategic requirement of diversity places a constraint on the approach to equalization; how is meaningful equalization to be achieved in ways compatible with meaningful decentralization?

Lastly, how are the benefits associated with centralization – a more thorough development of technical staff and planning support, better information and assurance of effectiveness of performance, the economies of large scale – to be achieved if a policy of decentralization is followed? Consideration of the issues in these terms leads to the recommendations which follow. First, however, we recapitulate the essential facts or beliefs on which the recommendations are based.

2. The Factual Basis for Decision. The recommendations which follow do not require acceptance of all the assertions contained in the body of the report. Much of what is in the preceding chapters reflects not a series of complex and interrelated facts building to a conclusion, but a search for a few relatively simple ideas about which there can be little dispute and on which a program can be based. The key facts or beliefs which the recommendations require are the result of that distillation process. They are as follows:

(1) Fiscal measures alone will not cause Massachusetts communities to make substantially equal educational resources available to children.

(2) One result of differences between communities is a difference in the salaries or conditions of work which they are prepared to offer to professional staff.

(3) The relationship between the collective bargaining position of a school district and commitment or local ability to pay is not simple and direct; for example, low commitment may be associated with a patronage ridden system and with an easy stance on salaries, or high commitment may be associated with attractive teaching conditions and a relatively hard line on salaries.

(4) Massachusetts communities will not accept a state controlled school system except under duress and will resist moves seen as being in that direction; however, this does not by law or policy remove from the state its responsibility to assure equity to children, to taxpayers and to public employees.

None of the above even require the existence of the condition that provided the original motivation for this report — an impression that the present system was under great stress. Viewed realistically, however, the stress adds an important reason to act, and a reduction of stress and a more workable system is an important result to be achieved.

Similarly, the above do not require an assumption that more resources in areas of low commitment will by themselves improve educational outcomes. In a now famous remark, John E. Coons responded to this point by saying that the poor should have the same opportunity that the rich have to prove that more resources will not improve education.[2] Our view is only slightly different: no one whould be able to place blame on the system established by the state, by design or default, for any educational disadvantage they incur. The responsibility should lie closer to home.

3. Recommendations. The recommendations are as follows:

(1) Massachusetts should move forcefully to reduce the effect of local resources on local school decisions, especially by —

a) mandating professional staff levels, and

b) adopting statewide approaches to the determination of appropriate teacher salaries, and

c) strengthened and more uniform systems for provision of adequate school facilities.

(2) The question of fiscal equity should be addressed in terms of how fairly to share the burden of substantially equalized educational resource availability for children, not in terms of how to equalize the ability of a district to raise revenues which it may not choose to raise and spend.

(3) The Board of Education and local school committees should cooperatively seek to introduce appropriate degrees of stability and strategic direction at all levels, especially by stimulating voluntary regional associations that would facilitate useful pooling of information among peers and better vertical communication between the state Board and the district school or associated committees.

The recommendations are discussed below, except that dealing with facilities, which is the subject of another report recently sponsored by the Advisory Council on Education.[3]

4.Staff Levels and Fiscal Measures. We regard it as overwhelmingly evident that fiscal measures alone, relying on a mix of state aid and differentiated incentives favoring poorer districts, will not cause educational resources available to children to approach equality. This does not say that fiscal measures are unimportant; they affect the average commitment level and the equity of the revenue and expenditure system. It would be difficult to sustain a policy of educational equity that was not supported by fiscal equity. However, we believe that the educational leadership should redirect

much of its effort to achieve equality of educational opportunity down a much simpler, more direct and more easily implementable route. That route is to mandate, in ways to be discussed shortly, substantially equal educational resources for the public school attending children in the state, regardless of where their parents may happen to live.

In essence, this is what the state does in its system of public higher education, where faculty positions are allocated on the the basis of enrollment. We think the state should, in effect, say to the children of the state that, no matter where they live, they are entitled to (for example) not less than thirteen and one-half years of an average one-twentieth of a professional educator's time.

Such an approach would have one consequence in common with fiscal programs that shifted major responsibility to the state or to the federal government. That consequence would be the freeing of school committees to do more of what school committees are supposed to do, which is provide community input into the content and style of the educational offerings in the community. Once a staffing level is mandated, budgets are substantially determined; staff costs run about 80% or more of operating budgets, so there is very much less to argue about. This would be particularly true now that teacher turnover is much reduced and the composition of staff is changing slowly. There is less opportunity to save by, for example, hiring more at the bottom of the scale or churning appointments of inexperienced teachers.

If collective bargaining is also made less a matter of local controversy, there is still less to argue about. If a statewide policy on personnel is formulated intelligently, the needs of children for equity can be met, and the tax experts and the elected officials can worry about the problem of tax equity in the state as a whole for all necessary state and local functions; school people can turn to worrying about about how to get the best educational results, starting from a resource base comparable to that of their neighbors.

(In focusing on staff levels, we do not mean to minimize the importance of other educational inputs such as instructional materials and supplies. The range of variation in these account classifications is greater than in staff, and it seems evident to us that many districts are penny-wise and pound

foolish. We will make an (uncollectable) bet with anyone that most districts that save on materials lose more than they save in increased teacher absenteeism and other manifestations of low morale. Nevertheless, the amounts are relatively small, and at least for the time being it seems wise to maintain an important ground for citizen, parent and teacher interest in the budget.)

The Board of Education can mandate maximum class sizes under its present powers. It seems likely it received that power because the Willis-Harrington Report, which gave rise to the Board and its definition of powers, called attention to variation in staffing ratios and presented recommendations for the establishment of minimum levels (pp. 325-328). It is not difficult to modify through waivers a mandate for maximum class size, to change it to a mandate for a minimum staff-pupil ratio, with all manner of variations possible between non-teaching specialists, classroom teachers, para-professionals, and so forth. There should not be any desire to impose a uniform technology on education, in terms of how best to use staff, unless someone has the foolhardy courage to believe he knows the best way for all educational situations.

The order should only apply to staff to be hired with state, local or federal impacted-area funds for regular educational programs. Cities and towns with exceptional needs, such as a high proportion of disadvantaged or foreign-language speaking students, could receive categorical aids directed to their specific problems reflecting their greater needs.

The fact that this power can be exercised by the Board at its convenience and in the name of equality of opportunity can solve many of the political problems of implementation. Of course, poorly staffed districts would complain bitterly to the Legislature, but in the current judicial and political climate it seems likely that any attempt to nullify by legislation a ruling issued in the name of equal protection of the law would either fail, be vetoed, or be nullified in court. In addition, we would recommend that any district staffed or wishing to staff below the mandated level could receive a waiver from the ruling on a showing that its educational

results were such that its children were not being discriminated against.

We would expect the Governor and the legislative leadership to be appalled as a first blush reaction at the thought of a commitment to mandated staffing levels that insured approximate equality of educational services. This is especially true since cost cannot at this time be closely estimated, since current data on staff levels are alleged to be notoriously inaccurate. (Neither for that matter can the cost of state aid be forecast, since no one knows what the districts will spend; we expect the cost to the state would be less than commonly proposed alternatives that would not equalize, such as 50% to 60% state funding.) However, we would ask the following of the political leadership:

(1) How else can the Legislature be forced to face up to the need for action on major tax revision and reform?

(2) How else can the divisions between and within school and municipal interests be substantially lessened, so that this division does not prevent their cooperative pressure for tax reform?

(3) How else can a clear deadline for needed reform be set, and set in a politically advantageous year by appropriately deferring the enforcement of the order?

(4) How else can a state program be devised that would not require substantial revision if the federal role changes markedly, or be delayed in anticipation of federal action?

(5) How else can the professed goal of substantial equality of educational opportunity be achieved?

In sum, it appears to us that there is considerable tactical merit in what may at first appear to be a rather wild-eyed-

scheme, even though its result is only to treat public education the way public higher education is now treated. Also, the timing is good; to oppose meaningful equality of opportunity in the current climate would be the political equivalent of opposing motherhood and the flag. We suggest this proposal offers a very powerful tool with which to move a most immovable state.

5. The Dilemma of Equality and Incentives. Paradoxically, the greatest fears attending a policy of equalization would probably be manifested in those communities which intentionally staff above any feasible minimum for the state as a whole. They are afraid that their commitment would be diluted to a level affordable by the state as a whole. This is the unfaced dilemma of encouraging high commitment while assuring reasonable equality. We consider now a way to resolve this dilemma. To do so, there are some prior considerations that must be introduced.

First, consider that many of the high staff ratios are in very small and relatively isolated communities, where there are not enough children to use staff efficiently. These might well be ignored for these purposes, although perhaps not for other purposes if the small size of the district is not due to geographical isolation but to the desire to protect a privileged tax base.

Second, note that the major criticism of high staff ratio districts is not just that the children there are privileged, but that the privilege they enjoy serves no overriding purpose of the state; it produces at best a tenuous and remote advantage for children in other districts, which may be influenced by the example or experiences of high commitment communities.

Third, consider that there probably is no single optimum staff level, permanent and unchanging through all conditions of prosperity or decline or through changes in cost or productivity. The optimum staffing level is not solely a technoligical decision of educators, but an economic decision of a community.

Fourth, consider that there is no effective way to prevent a community with taxing power that wants to spend more on its children from doing so. If they cannot do so

through the school system, they can move various school related services into other public agencies. Counseling, guidance, art and music, minor sports, much vocational and education-without-walls instruction, could as well be provided by other social agencies than schools, if the schools were constrained to a commitment level below what the community wanted.

These four considerations lead us to the belief that a reasonable percentage of children should be permitted in a state mandated system to enjoy the privilege of higher staffing levels than usual, if their communities so decide, but that the decisions of these leadership communities should be made directly to influence the laggards. That is, privilege should become conditioned with a public purpose, by requiring that the minimum staff level be tied to the levels of high commitment areas.

For example, the Board could decide to let 15% of public school attending children enjoy higher than mandated staffing levels. This would mean approximately 165,000 children out of 1,100,000. The very small districts have virtually no impact, since even their total is inherently small. The staffing level would be set by several substantially sized communities independently arriving at the conclusion that a higher than mandated level was desirable. If Boston were excluded from the calculation because of its relative size, dozens of districts would necessarily be involved.

We do not mean to imply that there is any special reason why 15%, as opposed to some other number, should be used. In such a program, the percentage might originally be higher, to moderate the cost increase that might result. The percentage could then fall over time in a phased program. What is important is the principle of linking the minimum staffing level to the independent judgment of those communities that elect a higher level.

Since this limited extent of privilege would have a direct social purpose beneficial to those not privileged, it would seem that a good case for permitting it could be made in court and elsewhere. This is particularly true in the absence of any reasonably efficacious alternative that does not completely eliminate local control. Note also that the privilege is in comparison to the average, not necessarily to

the poor. If the poor receive special help through categorical programs that are in addition to a mandated service level, as federal policy currently requires within a district, they too will be privileged in the sense of having more resources than the average.

This approach does not mean that the state will be required to commit resources to the level chosen by its wealthiest communities, because it is here that tax or state aid policy can intervene. Minor alterations of the state aid formula, or the proposal of the Master Tax Commission for a statewide property tax to meet school and other costs, would go far to equalize the ability of cities or towns to bear school costs, or to differentially favor poorer communities. Commitment levels arrived at through independent local decisions, rather than economic resources, would be the key. Even at the present level of state funding, our simulations of the state aid formula show that the cut-off point in the social decision on staffing levels would be made by communities whose fiscal potential for support of schools was not greater than that of the overwhelming majority of school districts.

It is therefore possible to move strongly and quickly to get substantially equalized educational resources for children, without first building an immense political grass roots campaign or engaging the Courts and the Legislature in a long running battle over whether a particular proposal does or does not have the requisite effects. It is possible to divert much of the attention of school committees from annual coping with a budget crisis and to direct their attention to what they are getting from the resources applied. Incentives given to local school committees would be shifted toward effectiveness and the development and use of information to prove effectiveness. By deferring the application of the order, or by starting with a standard that tolerated considerable inequality, the Legislature and the Governor could be given time to act on appropriate revenue or distribution measures that were based on equalized programs, rather than on unequal programs as at present, and school committees and superintendents could could be compelled to plan if they sought effective use of staff.

With a base of substantial equality in resources available, the use of educational output measures for inter-district

comparisons and evaluations makes more sense, and the stimulus to copy successful innovations is increased. Local control is preserved in the sense that local input rather than state directive shapes programs and the composition and utilization of staff; these are in all likelihood the most important elements of local control to preserve, although not without a continuing public scrutiny of results. While diversification might not result automatically, neither is it discouraged, which might well be a likely outcome of an approach originating in a state financing scheme.

This approach is also compatible with increasing productivity over time. Any true productivity increase would show higher educational output from given resources. Productivity is not measured only by the pupil-teacher ratio, but by what the pupils are getting from the educational process. If increases were obtainable, the case for higher staff levels in privileged districts would be weakened and presumably staff would be phased out. Alternatively, the practices leading to the increase, such as a creative use of educational television, might be adopted in the privileged districts and they may elect to use their extra staff in some other way, simply enjoying additional as well as higher educational outputs, rather than reduced costs. In any event, the approach is responsive to changed conditions, whether technological, economic, social or political.

The above approach not only meets the test of moving the state toward solution of a strategic problem, but it could go far to solve the day-to-day coping needs that preoccupy school committees and superintendents. The workload would become more manageable, and time and energy freed up for discretionary use. Of course, none of this by itself directly produces better educational outcomes. However, intellectual and leadership resources would be freed for that purpose, and incentives pointed far more forcefully in that direction.

Obviously, there is need for further study, to deal with such problems as different types of public education and different staffing mixes. For example, what rule should cover a district with a comprehensive high school, or a district with an academic high school that also is part of a vocational school district? Should a district be able to vary its elementary and secondary staffing ratios, or should the

mandate apply by level of instruction? Or, under what conditions should para-professionals be permitted to substitute for a smaller number of professionals? Such issues are clearly not insurmountable, there being considerable experience in other states in facing them.

Approaches to all these problems fall within the range of expertise of professional educational consulting firms, if the relevant experience is not presently available in the Department of Education. The Advisory Council has access to funds if the Board of Education does not.

The first obstacle such a firm would have to face is the fact that statewide data on personnel are not very accurate, particularly in the sub-classifications, due in substantial part to the relatively casual manner in which districts respond to questionnaires. The first step toward implementation, therefore, should be for the Board of Education to make it clear that it *means business* in this area, and that censuses are being designed and taken not just for information, but with a view toward the issuance of orders.

6. Collective Bargaining. The relationship with teachers' associations, whether affiliated with the Massachusetts Teachers Association or the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers, is one of the more ominous and vexing problems facing school systems. The reason is not simply that bargaining is not going well, but that we believe – despite some opinions from the field to the contrary – that it will tend to get worse.

The reason we believe the bargaining relationship will get worse is that our evidence indicates that it is worse when there is a high percentage of new members on the school committee. Thus, for any given committee, more experience leads to an expectation of a better bargaining relationship; however, the committees are changing rapidly, and this degree of change leads to an expectation of a worse relationsh p. (See Appendix A for a fuller discussion.) Our expectation is that the effect of turnover will outweigh the effect of more experience.

We emphasize "worse" particularly in one sense, and that is that the popular perception of the process will not lead to either public or teacher reassurance that the result is a fair

and proper one. For this reason, we expect second-order consequences to appear, in public rejection of school costs determined in large part by negotiated salary scales, or in teacher disaffection and growing militance and polarization. The problem is not that school committees and the associations are not becoming better able to reach agreements; it is that those affected by the agreements have little basis for confidence in the results.

This is a result of the emphasis on tactics, the treating of collective bargaining as a game of bluff, maneuver, perseverance, and occasionally politics, rather than as a joint effort to discover a best solution. This emphasis on tactics is encouraged by the wide variety of climates for bargaining in the state, by the great number of bargaining units, by the consequent opportunity for whipsawing strategems by the associations, and by the potential payoff for school committees in tactics of stalling until budgets are in or until the new school year has begun.

The problem of public confidence will even become more critical in the future, because contracts already negotiated insure substantial future increases in average salary costs. It seems likely that there will be a backlash to what has seemed in the past to be an advantageous public relations ploy, that of reporting teachers' salary settlements in terms of starting salaries. Actually, teachers' contracts typically provide for about a fifty percent increase in salaries over a ten year period, and at present, very few are being hired at starting rates. As seniority rises with the cessation of growth, any adjustment to scales is in addition to step raises of four to five percent. Communities that may have thought teachers cost $7,500 per year are finding they cost $13,000, and actually ten to twenty percent more if fringe benefits are considered.

We take no position on whether such salaries are too high, too low, or just right. (We do know teachers work tiring days, exhausting weeks – and easy years.) We are in no position at present to judge appropriateness, and that is the problem. We do not see the processes being followed as offering anyone a basis for such confidence.

The issues must be resolved, because Massachusetts cannot decide on a rational basis how much to commit to

education or how equitably to share the costs and benefits, without some sense of what salaries will be. To solve the priority and tax equity problem, it will be necessary to solve the salary equity problem. Similarly, the state or federal governments may well hesitate to take an increased share of the burden of the schools, if unwise local decisions on salaries determine what the burden will be. Presumably, neither level of government wants to be a contributor to excessive salaries paid in a patronage-ridden system, at one extreme, or to excessively low salaries that simply exploit teacher immobility and the shortage of job opportunities at the other. Lastly, and perhaps most important of all, it seems doubtful that the educational enterprise can ever function effectively if the teachers and the community representatives are polarized and antagonistic, even if only on this issue.

The following are some assumptions, drawn from our understanding of collective bargaining generally, that indicate the nature of the solution we are seeking:

(1) A proper salary level, and proper changes in salary levels, can be determined within quite close limits by a diligent, impartial and informed search of relevant facts and data.

(2) When an informed search is made, errors in the determination of proper salaries tend to be self-correcting within a reasonably short space of time; an undershoot or overshoot of a target by one or two percent is typically corrected at the next re-opening or even before.

(3) Only in exceptional cases, usually impending disaster or extraordinary and duplicable success, will the ability to pay of a particular employer be an important consideration; salaries should be set so as to simulate a competitive market in equilibrium, in which people with equal qualifications would be able, but have no incentive, to move to the most advantageous places of employment.

(4) Once a reasonable and proper relationship between salaries in one occupation or location and salaries in others is found, the major determinants of year-to-year changes are factors external to the employer or the employing industry, such as the change in national productivity or the cost of living. Put another way, once a proper salary structure is found, it is relatively easy to maintain it.

The first thing the above considerations make evident is that Massachusetts and most of its districts are operating in a policy vacuum. Just as local ability to tax has been a primary determinant of school programs, so local ability to pay, whatever that means, has conditioned salary schedules. Furthermore, children are directly affected, since the local salary level affects the ability to commit resources to education, not only in the number of people to be hired but their qualifications and backgrounds as well.

If education is a state responsibility, and even more so if the state intends, as we suggest, to require substantially uniform staffing, a first order of business should be to determine what the teaching staff ought properly to be paid, taking appropriate account of differences in conditions of work. This determination should not be made in absolute dollar terms, but as a set of relationships to variables that may change over time, such as incomes in other employments, cost of living, national productivity increases, interstate comparisons, employment conditions and whatever other factors an informed search indicates to be relevant or a good predictor of what is likely to happen in any event.

Note that while our recommendation emphasizes a statewide approach, it could be used equally well by any district that wanted to improve its own collective bargaining relationship or establish itself as a leader. In any event, we are **not** recommending statewide bargaining on a statewide salary schedule. The recommendation is for a statewide investigation leading to statewide guidelines which can be used to narrow the range of differences in local bargaining and provide a basis for a public evaluation of the outcomes.

Obviously, any such determination will not be accepted

just because some economist or arbitrator says that it is what he concludes. There is however a useful and encouraging precedent for parties to chronic disputes coming to the realization that both were losing, and turning to engage in a cooperative search for truth, to at least narrow and illuminate the range of issues they must resolve in active bargaining. This general approach lay behind the long-term contracts reached in the automobile industry in the 1950's, and also behind the Human Relations Committee that was able to forestall steel industry strikes following a series of collective bargaining disasters. In both cases, an immense amount of study took place, essentially outside the actual give and take of final bargaining.

One thing this approach needs that industry came to lack is national leadership equally or more militant than local leadership, which is equally or more militant than the work force. Thus, the work force would go along with the leadership. If long-term contracts result, it also needs the capacity to admit error and make corrections. In public education, fortunately, there is not usually –yet! – a high degree of rank and file militance and there is a general disposition to try to do the intelligent and right thing. For this reason, we think the approach has promise in the public education situation, if the employers will show the same disposition.

We believe that in collective bargaining there are researchable questions as well as bargainable issues, and that the question *What would determine equitable salary levels for teachers in various districts in Massachusetts if local differences in ability to pay were not a factor?* is in substantial part a researchable question. Even if the answer could not be specified or agreed to in precise detail the facts and analysis produced could do much to bring the parties closer together and to create both community and teacher support for any ultimate solution that was in the ballpark and reached through collective bargaining. Additionally, a fact-based and closely reasoned model can do much to lift local bargaining above the level of tactical maneuvers, personality clashes, threats and counter-threats, and so curtail the development of polarization.

The ground rules for such an approach are as follows:

(1) The bargaining leadership in both sides is involved.

(2) There is adequate staff support for both sides, as well as access to impartial third parties.

(3) Deliberations are private and confidential, so that either side can "try something on for size" without jeopardizing future bargaining positions.

(4) The agenda is to define and analyze the issues and to see how close the parties can come to an agreement on the principles that should govern agreements, the points that are relevant, and the size range of probable disputes; a major part of the effort is to predict as scientifically as possible what the outcome of vigorous, self-interested bargaining would be.

(5) The attitude maintained is that there is a right answer to which both sides would agree if they were intelligent and diligent enough in seeking it, and if possible, it is desirable to avoid disputes.

(6) The results of the deliberations are completed and available prior to active bargaining on the issues for new contracts.

There are at least two problems with implementing this approach in public education in Massachusetts. The first is that there are two statewide teachers' organizations, and their separate interests in gaining recognition and building membership may militate against their cooperation. However, the antagonism between the two seems less than in some other states, though perhaps not as little as in New York where they have merged, and both are led by highly respected individuals with reputations for competence and fairness.

The second problem is that there is no obvious source of leadership to represent the employers – the local school committees. While it is possible that their association might perform this role, we think it preferable that leadership be taken by the Secretary of Educational Affairs, not because he is necessarily **ex parte**, but because –

(1) state government is the largest single source of salary funds for teachers.

(2) what is sought is equity within a state system.

(3) the state needs an input into salary levels to determine appropriate funding levels or distribution formulas for state aid or other financial aid systems.

(4) putting initiative in state government at the point of input to the Governor's proposed budget provides the appropriate focal point for pressure from either school districts or teachers associations; if the system is too tight or too loose, the pressure should come at this point first.

(5) the Secretary can and should annually provide an up-date to the analysis, as part of a continuing process of examining the adequacy of the state's commitment to education, and this up-date can serve as a guideline for coming negotiations.

Clearly, under this leadership, the Board of Education and the Massachusetts Association of School Committees should have appropriate representation.

An alternative approach would be to have the Board of Education represent employer interests (although it has by statute a member from organized labor) and have the process be more like an arbitration proceeding than a precursor to negotiations. Thus the Secretary could retain a panel of arbitrators for the purpose of formulating policy and issue

their report as a state guideline for future negotiations. A common procedure is for each side to nominate one arbitrator and the two to be nominated to select a third as chairman. An interesting variation on this is to require the chairman to accept in full one or the other recommendation. This has the result of greatly narrowing the divergence between opposing points of view, since proposals that are far out of line are rejected out of hand. Arbitration approaches may lose something in the eventual consensus, but they would tend to insure a timely report.

Whichever approach is followed, the result is a highly informed, fact based, professionally competent statement of what current salary policy ought to be and why. If such a position paper was available to both sides of local negotiations, and to the general public (which in the towns must accept the settlement), it should greatly narrow the range of disputes and reduce the time spent in negotiations.

We adopt this approach of trying to make bargaining work better within the present legal framework, because we do not know how the former could be substantially improved, either in terms of changes that should be made or changes that could feasibly be turned into law. None of the obvious possibilities – the right to strike, compulsory arbitration, etc. – seem either sure of success as changes, or to have much chance of passage. Most such proposals simply add to the polarization. In this area, the need is to make the existing arrangements work better.

It is a mistake to assume, if anyone still does, that teachers associations will prove to be much different from any other employee association when it comes to issues affecting incomes. Their leadership can be expected to bargain as hard in the economic interest of their membership as any trade union, and to be about as responsive to pleas of poverty as a trade union would to a complaint that profits didn't rise very much this year. What has to be learned, as many unions and companies have, is that this opposition of interests need not cause fundamental and lasting antagonisms that interfere with effectively and cooperatively getting on with the job. The relationship however must be managed; good relations do not just happen. The preceding recommendation is a start, and only a start, toward building the

good relations that inexperience and the lack of a plan have jeopardized.

7.Changes in Organization. It seems to be one of our great American parlor games to underestimate the difficulty of managerial positions, especially in the public sector, and to conclude that those who hold them, simply and most charitably, are not very competent. Victims of this public sport range from whoever happens to be the President of the United States at the time to, and including, superintendents of schools. One of the rules of the game is that the more difficult the times make the position, the less capable the incumbent is held to be.

Our impression of superintendents, based simply on general experience with all kinds of managers and discussions with dozens of superintendents, is to the contrary. It seems to us that most superintendents of schools are at least as able and energetic as managers in private industry with comparable salaries and scope of authority, and probably a good deal more highly educated and self-educable. In most cases, their job is more demanding, if only because their authority is less clear and their accountability is to such a diverse and often unpredictable set of forces.

There are however some aspects of organization that would seem inevitably to limit their effectiveness. They lack the kind of staff support one would ordinarily find for middle-managers in a decentralized system, which is what they are if Massachusetts has a system of public education. We refer here not to the kind of support received from a staff responsible to them, but the kind of support that comes from a higher echelon that is equipped to pool information, to focus more resources on common problems than any one unit could do, and which could, as a most important function, provide a mechanism for peer group sharing of experience and ideas on difficult problems. (Collective bargaining experience is a good case illustrating the lack of such support and its consequences.) Instead of reporting, one way or another, to a higher level of management with greater expertise and a longer and broader perspective, from which support and guidance might be found, superintendents report to a school committee with a lower level of expertise, a more

parochial viewpoint, and a frequent tendency to confuse policy and operating concerns.

Of course, this does not imply that local school committees should be abolished; it says that they pose problems for managerial effectiveness for which it would be desirable to make some compensation.

To provide that compensating mechanism, which would be of use to both superintendents and to local school committees, we believe Massachusetts needs further development of that layer of management that lies between the districts and the Board and Department of Education. The nucleus for such an organizational stratum already exists in several regional organizations which serve many communities in limited ways. We believe they need further development, to insure the following:

(1) the continuous availability of a second informed professional opinion to superintendents, school committees and communities.

(2) structured and probing (not necessarily criticizing) peer group evaluations and idea exchanges.

(3) a manageable channel of communication to and from the Board of Education, and an agency that can speak for the districts to the Legislature without neglect of district business.

(4) a means of providing reasonable continuity and stability for goals at the district level, in the face of continuing turnover of policy-making and top operating positions.

(5) an organizational framework for the provision of cooperative services.

Such organizations should be creatures of the districts, building up from them toward the statewide level, and not down from the Department toward the districts. If we understand the viewpoint and biases of the districts at all,

they will not fully utilize or cooperate with an agency they do not control in important ways. The most important control is the selection of the chief administrator. We cannot imagine the regional offices of the Department expanding to fill a role that might grow reasonably easily from a *committee-of-committees* that hired a *superintendent-of-superintendents*. Any such effort by the Department would be seen as a move toward state takeover, which in time it might well be, and would be ignored at best and most likely vigorously resisted.

We do not recommend a line authority relationship, such as (supposedly) exists between a superintendent and principals in union districts. The leader should at most be first among equals. The thrust of the recommendation is to provide staff support and services of the kind a central organization usually provides managers ofunits in a decentralized organization, with emphasis on "staff" as opposed to "line." Chief among these support mechanisms is a famous institution in American business, the management meeting. This is simply a periodic occasion for managers to articulate their plans, raise and discuss their problems, review and explain their results. Properly run, there is a great deal of peer group interaction and idea exchange; it is less a matter of top management passing down orders than it is people testing and sharing their ideas and approaches with those in comparable positions.

This function already exists in part in regional associations of superintendents, and this may be a good base on which to build. Their main weakness is rotating leadership among the members, which breaks continuity and perhaps leads to avoidance of the difficult or potentially embarrassing issue. However, that they do find it worthwhile to meet and exchange ideas suggests that there is an opportunity for further advantages to be gained.

For public school administration, there is another potential advantage. Too many school committeemen know only their own superintendent, and their discussions and relationships with him have the disadvantage of always being constrained by the fact that they are employer and he is employee. One wonders what superintendents might say to school committeemen who are not their own, and **vice versa,**

and what both might learn therefrom. Whether regional organizations are stimulated or not, it would be worthwhile for the regional or state associations to experiment with programs that involved discussion of cases or issues between superintendents from one set of districts and school committeemen from another.

If it is desirable to give executive development experiences to superintendents, and we believe it is, the best way to do it is to build it into the nature of their jobs and their continuing responsibilities. From that we were able to observe in regional meetings, they have a great capacity for helping each other, in the sense that they could probably learn more from pooling ideas on difficult problems than they could in any conventional teacher-student relationship. However, they would benefit from a full time leader who can pull the questions out, ask for a coherent statement of the planned approach, guide the participation of peers in the consideration of the issues. For example, meetings, starting with a review of plans for a coming year and held for a full day monthly throughout the year, would probably do more to raise competence levels and problem-solving ability than any educational program involving comparable commitments of time or resources. They would ease the burden on the new man. They would also give superintendents the advantage of a rehearsal of their position on difficult issues, and the possible support to be gained from having separate professional endorsement of their recommendations.

We do not believe the leadership role in such an agency could be played by an employee supervised by the Department of Education; if nothing else, the stature of the man required to fill the job would cause him to have a salary level at least as high as the superintendents and in some cases as high or higher than the Legislature (unfortunately) sees fit to authorize for the Commissioner. More importantly, though, he should typify the leader who is a servant, not only of the superintendents but of their districts.

Given that the quality of the incumbent is the most important consideration, there is a need for other activities that would justify his cost and utilize his talents. For all these reasons, we favor the development of regional organizations that are creatures of the districts rather than of the

Department. The more cooperative ventures and activities that can be sponsored in such regional agencies, the more capable the person who can be attracted to the job. We therefore would encourage the policy of developing regional organizations via a substantial reimbursement of expenditures voted locally to support them, as in the practice in New York, rather than by extension of the range and scope of regional offices. If other studies are to be believed, the advantages of such associations can in many cases more than justify their cost.[4] Their potential for improving management in the districts and liaison with the state are enormously valuable joint products, and these should be controlling in their organization and staffing.

Finally, we believe the broadened perspective that such agencies would create would do much to foster diversity, in that they would show the possibility of different approaches and provide ready access to new ideas and new means of implementing them. They would call attention to whether outputs corresponded to inputs, and whether equal resources were in fact producing equal opportunity. The use of newly developing information systems and program budgets can only achieve a small portion of their potential value without well understood points of reference and comparison. A level of management that can compare with understanding and without excessive threat, and follow through from an identified problem to the design of a well-informed program of constructive change, would be vastly superior to the simplistic *fire the superintendent* or *throw out the school committee* strategies for change that characterize so many districts today.

One last advantage may be found. Massachusetts at present lacks a forceful and effective policy for school district reorganization, due in large part to the militant localism of its many communities. It also lacks a policy for districts that may be too large for effective response to sectional interests. It may be that organizations such as proposed can provide an acceptable half-way house, securing at least some of the advantages of a more optimal scale of operations.

8. Conclusions. Many of the problems of public school governance are not, as commonly supposed, the result of the nature of the times in which we live or of the inadequacy of men and women who manage our school systems. They are the result of our failure to provide a management system for public education in the state as a whole that adjusts to the character of the times in which we live and to realistic potentials for the people who must make the system work.

The recommendations in this study take two approaches to this problem. First, redefine the tasks of the districts, taking from them those that are most unsolvable on the local level, and particularly those that cannot be solved in ways that are consistent with the goal of equality of educational opportunity. Thus, we have recommended mandated staffing levels, substantially equalized between districts, to remove both a major manifestation of inequality and a major cause of local conflict. This policy should be a companion to policies aimed at producing an equitable division of the fiscal burden of public education.

Second, provide more support for district management, in the form of better policy guidance on collective bargaining and in the encouragement of inter-district agencies, subsidized in substantial part by the state but organized and run by the constituent districts. In the case of collective bargaining, better policy guidance would come, in one way or another, from a more thorough, professional, unbiased and fact-based investigation of the issues than any one district could hope to provide. In the case of inter-district agencies, better management would in the first instance come from a better utilization of skills and knowledge already possessed by a group of superintendents and school committeemen; at present, such exchanges occur, but they are most often casual and informal. There is a great potential in more emphasis on group problem solving in regular quasi-formal meetings in organizations designed in large part for that purpose.

The two approaches are compatible but independent. The first would move the state toward its avowed goal of equality of opportunity. The second would help local district management better to solve their problems or to make educational progress, regardless of the social, economic, political or managerial environment. Either or both would

reduce the scope of local issues and increase the intellectual resources available for solving those problems that remain. Foremost among these is of course the quality of the educational experience of the children, a continuing issue that currently suffers from the diversion of interest to other topics.

The process at work which is causing a bad situation to get worse would be interrupted, reducing school committee turnover and giving them less reason to fire their superintendents, in the hope that a new person could work miracles, and fewer new members would come in bringing agendas or behavioral patterns that are counter-productive.

Under such conditions, local school districts and administrations could begin to heal their own wounds; without such conditions, it is doubtful that any implementable changes in formal organizational relationships, or general prescriptions on how better to cope, would do much good.

APPENDIX A: DISCUSSION OF METHOD

1. Introduction. This Appendix contains the questionnaires used in the study and discussion of the purposes they served. It is worth repeating here that the general view of the situation in Massachusetts public education is not derived solely from this source, but from a variety of inputs, and that the conclusions asserted in the text state our views, which some may share and others may not. We believe we have some credible evidence, but it is not in the nature of work of this kind to be able to offer conclusive proof of anything.

Where questionnaire data were used in raw score form, the results are supplied in the text, as when we say, for example, that 50 of the 116 school committee members reported in the sample were in their first term of office. More use was however made of correlation techniques, in which a correlation between one or a set of variables and others was calculated. Needless to say, this was done by a computer, and the results then studied for informative relationships. The power of the computer is such that it is in most cases cheaper and easier to correlate any single or set of variables with all other variables than to program a restricted set of calculations. This contributes to massive output in terms of bulk, in this case a three-foot high stack of printouts.

This in turn makes it impossible to present the data in a form that permits anyone to ask any question of it, even if the answer would be readily obtainable by running the cards with appropriate instruction. For this reason, the IBM cards and other working papers are preserved and any particular issue that arises may be resolved, if necessary, by ordering a special run. This is not particularly efficient for any one query, but without knowing what the query might be, we see no other solution.

In our view, the most important conclusions supported by the questionnaire data concern the effect of the number of first term members on the school committee. A collection of relationships supporting this analysis is reproduced below, to illustrate the procedure followed.

2. The Questionnaire Process. The questionnaires are attached to this Appendix. There were 27 communities in our sample; nine cities, nine suburban communities and nine rural towns. We started the selection process by soliciting from informed advisors a longer list of communities which they thought covered a broad range of experience in handling budget and teachers' negotiations. From these lists we selected the nine communities in each group, with variations in geographic location and wealth.

The questionnaire set involved four separate sections, one to be answered by the superintendent, one by the school committee chairman, unless he was also mayor, one by the principal bargainer for the committee, and one by the teacher's representative. In some cases, both parts of the school committee questionnaire were answered by the same individual.

The decision to select a sample rather than to blanket the state was made after the three pretests of the questionnaire. Follow-up interviews and pretests generally supplemented the analysis, and supported or de-bugged our questions. We did not cut down the length of the forms to the extent we had originally planned, because we were not sure where significant relationships might be found. Instead, we decided to control our sample and work to insure a high rate of response, and to seek validation by interviews and splitting the analysis of the sample into two parts, one for hypothesis formation and one for test.

The response rate was 94%. Five respondents out of a possible 81 did not return their forms; one superintendent, one school committee member and three teacher organizations' representatives. The superintendent and school committee member were from the same small town. The difficulty we had in getting school committee members to respond itself lended confirmation to our conclusion concerning their difficulty in coping with the time demands of their job, so we were greatly pleased that only one did not reply. The three teachers' representatives were from metropolitan communities in which negotiations were not yet concluded. Two of the three specifically stated their concern over the confidentiality of the information requested and the possible harm to their bargaining position that release of that

information would cause. All three were supported by their state affiliate in their decision not to participate. This concern for tactical advantage was one of our first indications of how bargaining was going throughout the state.

3. Assumptions. The questionnaires endeavored to aggregate a variety of information on job satisfaction, perceptions of issues, characterizations and attributes of members, etc. A more important part of the effort was however to examine the power relationships that existed and to see how different power centers were reaching accommodations with each other. Particular emphasis was placed on relations with teachers in collective bargaining and on relationships with municipal officials in the budget setting process. The general hypotheses being tested were that local communities act out in the budget and bargaining processes their ideas of how power should be distributed in school systems, that some of these implicit perceptions were causing these two processes to become less rather than more effective, and that the way communities were coping with them was in fact contributing to their complication.

Assumptions were built into a model of negotiations which guided our investigation. That model hypothesizes the characteristics of a *good* bargaining relationship, as follows:

1. The legitimacy of the opposing interest and its spokesmen is recognized. Unless *recognition* is both formally and emotionally accepted, it will become a central issue.
2. It is known before bargaining begins that the issues in dispute accurately reflect the true concerns of the parties; there are no hidden agendas.
3. Before bargaining begins, the probable issues are identified and there is a joint search for and/or exchange of all data believed to be relevant and accurate; issues of fact are resolved; facts are not withheld for future use in bargaining; preparation is thorough.
4. There is an understanding that a *best* solution exists and a desire to search for it.
5. Prior positions that might be difficult to alter are not publicly taken; ideological stands are minimized.
6. The issues are not tried in the press; both sides are free

to try something on for size; confidences are strictly honored.

7. There is evidence of top-level concern and mutual respect; the leadership or decision-makers are always accessible if not continually involved; negotiations are business-like and unemotional; personality issues are avoided.
8. Both sides have developed goals and objectives; where possible, these are derived from facts previously produced.
9. Lawyers may be used to give effect to agreements, to counsel negotiators, or to negotiate with lawyers representing the other side; they are not used by one side to negotiate with non-lawyers on the other side.
10. Long-term agreements covering all or part of the relationship are sought; there is an effort to confine the issues to be treated in subsequent negotiations.
11. A means for settling future disputes about the terms of the agreement is included in the negotiations.
12. When an agreement is reached, it is "sold" to the relevant constituencies; the facts on which it is based are shown.
13. Bargainers for each side recognize the needs of their opposite numbers for support from their constituency. No one is portrayed as winning or losing; negotiations are always *tough* and the result is always *as much as* or *as little as* possible.

The above conditions describe a bargaining relationship which we would predict would lead to a low level of polarization and toward a high degree of cooperation on matters of common interest. It is normative in the sense that we believe this is a desirable outcome in town-teacher and town-school relationships. To the extent other relationships are observed, we would predict higher polarization and reduced cooperation, and we would characterize that as undesirable in the school situation, and as likely to produce backlash in one form or another.

Some alternative kinds of relationships are as follows: [1]

1. Power bargaining, distinguished by a pragmatic exploitation of every advantage, in a context in which

the other side and its leaders are recognized and accepted, but not given any support or gain except as a response to pressure.

2. Containment, where one group is actively seeking to expand its scope of action, while the other tries to contain it; this relationship is characterized by the defensive side taking a legalistic and traditional position and resisting any efforts at change.
3. Conflict, which is the extreme of a containment relationship, in which no scope of power or action by one group is acceptable to the other, and power is mobilized and used to draw the other out of existence.
4. Accommodation, in which the parties accept each other in good spirit and are willing to explore new opportunities for programs or bargains of mutual advantage.
5. Cooperation, characterized by an almost complete acceptance of common goals and a broad range of mutual concerns and interests.
6. Ideology, usually a conflict pattern, but also characterized by approaches and interests that go far beyond the relationship at hand; for example, the Communist-dominated unions of the early 1940's adopted bargaining strategies that depended more on whether or not Russia was at war with Germany than on the actual conditions in the company.

Note that while such models were developed from theory and experience in labor relations, they can apply equally well to any situation in which separate interest groups negotiate agreements between themselves. Thus, essentially the same model and predictions would apply to teacher collective bargaining, to any negotiations on budgetary matters between school and municipal officials, or to other relationships with groups whose interests may be opposed.

4. Findings–The Effect of New Members. Of course, correlation does not prove causation. In many cases, causation is ambiguous; for example, do school committees with more new members see the school committee as having more bargaining power because they are new and uniformed, or because they are more aggressive about using the power they have? Sometimes, the causal links are indirect or the

correlation is merely coincidental. Other times, causation is ambiguous. Do new members cause more friendly relations with municipal officials, or do the less friendly relations of more senior committees tend to cause new members? Thus, all one has to work with is an observed relationship, which does not make it possible to avoid the use of judgment and interpretation.

The following table presents a selection of those relationships that appeared from the computer runs to have possible meaning. (In some cases, the absence of a relationship is treated as significant.) For simplicity in the exposition, we use here only Pearson correlation coefficients denoted R, the most commonly used measure of correlation, and show the number of respondents (N) and the statistical significance P. (The lower P, the greater the statistical significance.) Since the sample was not large, and in many cases responses on a particular item were few, the statistical significance figures do not have much meaning either in support or in rejection of a particular relationship. They are included as a customary courtesy to readers who may be interested in such matters.

TABLE I

CORRELATION OF PERCENT OF FIRST TERM MEMBERS WITH VARIOUS RESPONSES

Superintendent's Responses	R	N	P
1. Appointed the superintendent	-0.3051	26	.065
2. School committee interest in patronage	-0.4583	6	.219
3. School committee with children in school	0.4989	6	.157
4. School committee with previous political experience	-0.3166	13	.146
5. Superintendent years if office	0.3634	24	.040
6. Superintendent from outside district	-0.3030	25	.070
7. Superintendent needs political public relations training	0.3159	25	.062
8. Superintendent not advise friend to become superintendent	0.2422	25	.122
9. Superintendent dissatisfaction level	0.2478	25	.116
10. Superintendent dislikes features of job	0.2268	25	.138

11. Superintendent too little leisure	0.3140	25	.063
12. Superintendent job-home conflict	0.2846	25	.084
13. Budget most important issue	0.3798	25	.187
14. Curriculum as an important issue	-0.5180	12	.042
15. Plant as an important issue	0.3020	15	.137
16. Youth behavior as an important issue	-0.5180	12	.042
17. Collective bargaining as an important issue	0.2801	9	.233
18. Management effectiveness issue	-0.4264	4	.287
19. Involvement of groups as an issue	-0.7906	5	.056
20. Ability to deal with youth behavior	0.6364	4	.182
21. Ability of school committee to deal with collective e bargaining	-0.6516	8	.040
22. Ability to deal with different groups	-0.8165	4	.092
23. Degree of budget controversy	-0.1988	20	.200
24. Degree of bargaining controversy	-0.5119	8	.097
25. Degree of plant controversy	-0.0339	15	.452
26. Degree of school management controversy	-0.4545	4	.273
27. Degree of organized budget resistance	-0.2862	18	.125
28. Degree of bargaining resistance	-0.5047	8	.101
29. Trust of municipal officials	0.2631	25	.102
30. Trust by municipal officials	0.1910	25	.180
School Committee Questionnaire, Part I			
31. Issues important in election	0.4889	23	.009
32. Members wanting other office	0.3334	24	.056
33. Superintendent needs public relations ability	0.2857	25	.083
34. Superintendent needs planning ability	0.3307	25	.053
35. Plant as an issue	0.2442	16	.181
36. Budget as an issue	0.1379	19	.287
37. Bargaining as an issue	0.1960	13	.261
38. Educational results as an issue	-0.3333	8	.210
39. School management as an issue	-0.4752	7	.141
40. Ability to handle budget issues	0.3417	20	.070
41. Ability to handle bargaining issues	0.2272	12	.239
42. Ability to handle plant issue	0.2523	15	.182

43. Strength of controversy-curriculum	0.3757	12	.114
44. Strength of controversy-results	0.5043	9	.083
45. Strength of controversy-budget	-0.2464	20	.147
46. Confidence in budget	-0.3258	23	.065
47. Chance of negative budget recommendation	-0.4922	25	.006
48. Hours at school committee meetings	-0.2215	23	.155
49. Hours in homework	-0.0121	22	.479
50. Hours with municipal officials	-0.1692	24	.215
51. Extent of direction to superintendent concerning budget	-0.2196	25	.146
52. Friendliness with officials	0.2761	20	.119
53. Approved programs not implemented	-0.3857	24	.031
54. Power lies with officials more than with school committee	0.3299	24	.058
55. Officials see selves with more power than school committee	0.4019	24	.026
56. Superintendent's influence on officials	-0.3229	25	.058
57. Officials views threaten school committee legal rights	-0.5275	14	.026
Teachers' Questionnaire			
58. Teacher success in negotiations	-0.3548	23	.048
59. School committee tendency to dismiss proposals	0.2786	19	.124
60. School committee willingness to clarify facts, consider new proposal	-0.6176	20	.002
61. School committee interest in teacher intentions	-0.2483	20	.146
62. School committee threat of budget veto	-0.5231	22	.006
63. Forecast teachers absenteeism	0.2694	22	.113
64. General coercive practices	0.2725	23	.104
65. Principals at negotiations on own initiative?	0.6455	5	.120
66. Principals present at school committee initiative?	-0.7276	6	.051
67. Teachers accept factfinder report	0.3273	10	.178
68. School committee accept factfinder report	-0.2500	10	.243
69. Number of bargaining sessions	-0.3530	23	.049
70. Is bargaining better?	-0.1319	23	.274
71. School committee cooperation on non-economic issues	-0.5054	23	.007
72. School committee friendliness with teachers	-0.5036	23	.007
73. School committee has more power	0.3839	23	.035

74. Teachers trust committee	-0.2254	23	.151
75. School committee trusts teachers	-0.2856	23	.093
76. Teacher ability to sell agreement to constituency	-0.3834	23	.035
77. Teacher worsening attitude toward school committee	0.2801	25	.088

Most of the above provide a basis for comparison between committees with more new members and committees with more senior members. Thus, they provide a basis for appraising the impact of increasing turnover. For example, items 58 to 77 indicate to us that teachers are less satisfied with collective bargaining when there are more new members, and that distrust and polarization seem to be encouraged by school committee turnover under present conditions. Item 21 shows superintendents to have a low estimate of the ability of such committees to handle collective bargaining well, and Item 70 shows teachers not to expect bargaining to get better. Item 41, however, shows the committees confident of their ability to handle collective bargaining effectively, which suggests no great incentive to change.

Therefore, we predict that collective bargaining is likely to get worse rather than better, despite the contrary opinion generally expressed in the total sample of school committees in the questionnaires. If committees held the composition of their membership, perhaps it would get better, but they are not holding their composition. Thus, the prediction is essentially that the negative effects of turnover will come to outweigh the positive effects of more experience, in the present climate.

Obviously, there are leaps of inference in reasoning such as the above. How, for example, do we know that effects of turnover, even if negative, will outweigh effects of experience, even if they are positive? All that can be said is that this is our best guess based on the information at hand. Even more important, however, is the judgment that acting on the assumption that it is true will cause very little disadvantage if it proves to be false. However, a failure to act could be highly disadvantageous if it does prove to be true.

Classical statisticians, which is what most people in education are trained to be, will doubtless be offended by

this procedure, but modern (Bayesian or decision theory) statisticians should be comfortable with it. The latter are concerned with the costs and benefits of decisions made on the basis of incomplete information, while the former are more concerned with the formal procedures of proof. Our bias is toward the modern approach in this situation, since any one who insists on scientific standards of proof in this area will never act on anything, since no one knows how to meet such standards in problems of this type.

MACE STUDY ON SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

January 21, 1972

Dear Mr. Superintendent,

In John Gardner's phrase, "The system has been chewing up good men." For some time many observers have felt that increasing strains were taking a toll on superintendents and school committee members that sooner or later would impair the functioning of the schools, if they were not doing so already.

Out of this concern, a cooperative effort was formed involving the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), and, as funding agent, the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education (MACE). The purpose of the joint effort was to design a project that would offer some accurate diagnoses of what the problems were and would offer some specific programs of response that could be implemented.

All concerned felt it important to cover the entire state, which is something that can only be done by questionnaires. Accordingly, we ask your help with the enclosures. One is directed to you; one, a two-part questionnaire, we ask that you give to the Chairman of your school committee for distribution; and one we ask that you give to the head of the teachers' bargaining team in the most recent collective bargaining negotiations.

In a few communities, the Chairman of the school committee is also the Mayor; in this case, please give the school committee questionnaire set to the Vice Chairman.

We have endeavored to keep all the questionnaires short enough to be answered in less than 45 minutes, and answerable from information ordinarily carried "in your head". All responses will be strictly confidential and seen and used only by the study staff. However, we do need identification, so that we can characterize results by region, size of community, and other variables, and so that we can relate other data on districts, available from published sources, to some of the responses.

I hope you will find the questionnaire interesting, and that I can count on your cooperation.

Very sincerely,

Paul W. Cook, Jr.

jm

Robert C. Wood, Study Advisor
Maurice A. Donahue, Study Advisor

INTRODUCTION--Superintendent's Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being sent to all superintendents of schools in Massachusetts. Recognizing how busy you are, especially at this time of year, we have tried to avoid asking for information which is available from other sources. Naturally, we have to have identifying information to be sure that your responses are matched with other data on the school districts for which you are responsible, and we ask for current data on the 1970 Population Census of your district as well as the October 1, 1971 enrollment figures which have not yet been published.

The other questionnaires which we have requested you distribute to the school committee Chairman (or Vice Chairman in cities where the Mayor is also school committee Chairman) and to a representative of the teachers' organization are different. Each will contribute special information to the development of a profile of your school district.

The purpose of these questionnaires is to obtain a profile of the extent and kinds of conflict situations that school committees in Massachusetts are finding themselves involved in at the present time, and the success that is being found in coping with them. By "conflict situations" we mean situations in which opposed interests or views are presented, and the requirement is for some settlement or agreement reconciling differences. The situations may run from the full spectrum from an easy and friendly meeting of minds to continuing and unresolved confrontation; we are not interested only in the latter, if for no other reason than that we want to find out what makes some issues resolvable and others not.

Clearly, all elements of such problems cannot be discovered by questionnaire, and the study as a whole will involve field work, interviews and other sources.

Instructions for Superintendent's Questionnaire

(1) CIRCLE OR CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AND FILL IN THE BLANKS AS INDICATED.

(2) IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER SEEMS TO APPLY, CIRCLE OR CHECK THE ONE THAT SEEMS TO BE MOST APPLICABLE.

(3) IF THE ANSWER IS NOT KNOWN OR THE QUESTION DOES NOT APPLY TO YOUR SITUATION, LEAVE BLANK.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. At your earliest opportunity, distribute a school committee questionnaire set to the Chairman of each school committee to which you are responsible. If the Chairman is the Mayor of your city, give the school committee questionnaire set to the Vice Chairman.

2. Give a teachers' negotiation questionnaire to the head of the teachers' bargaining unit with which your committee negotiates in each community to which you are responsible. Do not give the questionnaire to a Unit B negotiator, to a regional representative or to another negotiator retained by the teachers; it is designed to be filled out by someone employed in your system and representing the classroom teachers' bargaining unit.

3. Ask each to place his questionnaire in the enclosed envelope and mail it as addressed. The postage is prepaid.

4. Please complete a questionnaire yourself, and return it as promptly as possible.

Note to Union and Regional School District Superintendents:

Rather than fill out separate forms for each school district in your Superintendency Union or Regional School District, would you answer the following questions (with the exceptions indicated below) as if you were Superintendent of one school district made up of all of the districts under your supervision. Include information on the Regional School District only if you also wear the cap of the Regional School Superintendent. Since questions 1, 2, 3, and 6 under B below refer to single school committees, please respond for the school committee which represents the largest school district. If you prefer, make notes in the margins of special situations which affect your composite Union response.

SUPERINTENDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

YOUR NAME_____ TEL. NO._____

CODE NO._____

A. Information about the district:

1. School district name(s)_____

2a. Is this a union superintendency? . . . . . Y N
2b. Are you also superintendent of a regional school district? Y N

3. If yes, to either "a" or "b" above, what other communities are involved?

a. (in the union?)_____

b. (in the region?)_____

4. Total resident population of the entire school district(s):

(IF 1970 CENSUS COUNT IS KNOWN, PLEASE ENTER IT HERE.)

_____

Less than 10,000_____
10,000-25,000_____
25,000-40,000_____
40,000-60,000_____
Over 60,000_____

5. School attending children in public schools (as of October 1, 1971):

_____

6. What grades does your superintendency now cover? _____to_____

B. Information about the school committee--in the case of union or regional school district superintendencies, answer with respect to the district whose population is largest and list the district used.

(_____)

1. Is the mayor a member of the school committee? . . . Y N
2. Number of members (other than the mayor) . . . . . _____
3. Regular term of office . . . . . Years _____
4a. Number of members in first term of office . . . . . _____
4b. How many of the current members have been on the school committee since you were first appointed to the position of superintendent? . . . . . _____
5. Is it your impression that the school committee is more conservative/traditional, more progressive/liberal, or unchanged as a consequence of most recent changes in its composition?

Conservative_____ Liberal_____ Unchanged_____

6. Could you indicate what you think is the chief reason each member ran for election to that school committee? (Do not include the mayor in this item even if he does serve as chairman of the school committee.)

	(Check At Least One Reason For Each) SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
(1) Felt that someone had to see that school expenditures were increased									
(2) Wanted certain friends to get in or to advance in the school system								✓	
(3) Felt that the school superintendent should be removed									
(4) A certain group in the community felt that they should be represented on the school committee									
(5) Felt that someone had to see that school expenditures were decreased									
(6) Felt it to be his (her) civic duty									
(7) Did not like the way his (her) children were being educated									
(8) Disapproved of the way the schools were being run									
(9) Was interested in getting some experience in politics									
(10) Other (see below)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Comment: Member Number ( ) _____
Member Number ( ) _____
Member Number ( ) _____

C. Information about the superintendent:

1. Age _____
2. Years in present position . . . . . _____
3. Was previous position a superintendency? . . . . . Y N
4. Was previous position in your present district? . . . Y N
5. Highest degree held:
   Bachelor's____ Master's____ Doctorate____ Other____
6. Do you have access to in-service executive development programs of more than one-day duration, oriented to the job of the superintendent? . . . . . Y N
7. Have you attended such a program in the past 12 months? Y N

8. Choose from the list below the areas where you feel that in-service or pre-service education would be, or has been, most beneficial to you, and rate these on the basis of the strength of the current demand upon you in those areas.

	Low Demand				High Demand
a) Accounting, finance	1	2	3	4	5
b) Human relations, administrative practices	1	2	3	4	5
c) School law	1	2	3	4	5
d) Public and political relationships	1	2	3	4	5
e) Labor relations, collective bargaining	1	2	3	4	5
f) Other _____	1	2	3	4	5
g) Other _____	1	2	3	4	5
h) Other _____	1	2	3	4	5

9. What kind of job do you think you are doing in each of the following activities associated with your job? (Response categories: Excellent(E), Good(G), Fair(F), or Poor(P).)

(1) PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION: The selection of teachers and other school employees, salaries, assignments, promotions, and separations from service.	E	G	F	P
(2) FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION: Budgets, handling of funds, purchases, and accounting.	E	G	F	P
(3) SCHOOL PLANT MANAGEMENT: Site selection, relations with architects and contractors, furniture and equipment, repairs, and custodial services. . .	E	G	F	P
(4) INSTRUCTIONAL DIRECTION: Curriculum planning, methods of teaching, evaluation of activities, working with teachers, audio-visual materials, textbooks, and libraries.	E	G	F	P
(5) PUPIL SERVICES SUPPLEMENTARY TO INSTRUCTION: Transportation, health services, and school lunches.	E	G	F	P
(6) PUBLIC RELATIONS: Community contacts with organizations, newspapers, radio, reporting to the public.	E	G	F	P
(7) GENERAL PLANNING: for the school program as a whole.	E	G	F	P

In answering the following twelve questions (Numbers 10-21), please consider the superintendency as a career rather than your present job.

---

10. How much does the superintendency give you a chance to do the things at which you are best?

    a. A very good chance ____
    b. A fairly good chance ____
    c. Some chance ____
    d. Very little ____

11. How does the superintendency compare with other types of work?

    a. It is the most satisfying career a man could follow. ____
    b. It is one of the most satisfying careers. ____
    c. It is as satisfying as most careers. ____
    d. It is less satisfying than most careers. ____

12. Considering the superintendency as a whole, how well do you like it?

    a. I like it very much ____
    b. I like it fairly well ____
    c. I don't like it too well ____
    d. I don't like it at all ____

13. Are there any features of the job of superintendent which you dislike?

    a. Very many ____
    b. Quite a few ____
    c. Only a couple ____
    d. None ____

14. If you "had to do it over again" would you enter the field of the superintendency?

    a. Definitely yes ____
    b. Probably yes ____
    c. Probably no ____
    d. Definitely no ____

15. Are you making progress toward the goals you had set for yourself in your occupational career?

    a. I have achieved my goals. ____
    b. I am making good progress toward my goals. ____
    c. I am making some progress toward my goals. ____
    d. I don't seem to be getting anywhere. ____
    e. No answer ____

16. Has the superintendency lived up to the expectations you had before you entered it?

a. Yes, in all respects ____
b. In most ways ____
c. In only a few ways ____
d. Not at all ____

17. If a young friend of yours were entering the field of education, would you advise him to aim for the superintendency?

a. Definitely yes ____
b. Probably yes ____
c. Probably no ____
d. Definitely no ____

18. Do you feel that the work which you do as a superintendent is satisfying?

a. Very satisfying ____
b. Fairly satisfying ____
c. Fairly dissatisfying ____
d. Very dissatisfying ____

19. How many features of the job of superintendent do you especially like?

a. Very many ____
b. Quite a few ____
c. Some ____
d. Very few ____

20. In general, do you feel that superintendents are given adequate recognition when compared to that received by other professionals such as lawyers and doctors?

a. Yes definitely ____
b. In most respects ____
c. In some respects ____
d. Not at all ____

21. How much opportunity does the superintendency give you to follow your leisure time interests?

a. Very adequate ____
b. Adequate ____
c. Inadequate ____
d. Very inadequate ____
e. No answer ____

22. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by checking the appropriate box to the right.

	Never	Occasionally	Often	Frequently
(1) Do the problems associated with your job keep you awake at night?				
(2) Once you have made a decision do you find yourself worrying whether you made the right decision?				
(3) Are you nervous when you go to school committee meetings?				
(4) Do you "take your job home with you" in the sense that you think about your job when you are doing other things?				
(5) Do you breathe a sigh of relief when you travel away from your community?				
(6) Do you worry about what an individual or group will do if you make a decision contrary to their wishes?				

23. Following these directions there is a list of problems and issues which some school districts face, as well as some blank spaces in which you can write additional problems and issues.

1. FIRST, be sure the list contains the four most important issues facing your district at this time by writing in additional issues as necessary.

2. THEN, in Column A rank order the four most important issues your district faces, including those issues you added to the list, by placing a 1 beside the most important, 2 beside the second most important, and so on through 4.

3. To complete Column B, consider how well equipped you and your local school committee are to develop solutions to the four problems. Then, rank order the four issues already identified as most important, indicating with a 1 the issue your district is best equipped to deal with or lead to a problem solution, with a 2 the issue your district is next best equipped to govern, and so on through 4. (Ignore the other issues.)

4. In Column C, for these same four issues, assign numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 to the degree of controversy surrounding the issue, as follows: DO NOT RANK
   1) Would indicate a heated public controversy.
   2) Stands for a strong position with growing support.
   3) Represents a problem with mild support on both sides.
   4) Signifying a relatively quiet problem.

5. In Column D, for the same four issues considered most important (again, do not rank) assign numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 to indicate the degree of organization of those whom you would regard as "the opposition" as follows:

1) Highly organized, including individuals, small groups, continuing interest groups, plus direct involvement of elected officials.
2) Individuals and small groups, plus continuing interest groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, important business organizations, N.A.A.C.P., League of Women Voters, etc.
3) Individuals and small interest groups organized around this issue.
4) A few individuals only.

	(Col. A) Rank (1-4) Importance To Our District	(Col. B) Rank (1-4) Capability To Guide the Dev. of Solutions	(Col. C) Degree of Controversy (See Directions)	(Col. D) Degree of Organiz. of the Opposing Parties
(1) Adequacy of physical plant				
(2) Operating budget and tax rate				
(3) Parochial school potential or actual closings				
(4) Youth behavior on and off premises				
(5) Collective bargaining with teachers				
(6) Educational and curriculum philosophy and policy				
(7) Educational results being achieved				
(8) Racial issues and minority issues				
(9) Comprehensive education and vocational education				
(10) Cost effective educational management				
(11) Public involvement				
(12) Student self-direction				
(13)				
(14)				
(15)				

24. In the budget approval process between municipal officials (Finance Committee, Selectmen, City Council, etc.) and the school committee, to what extent do you think the school committee trusts municipal officials?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

25. To what extent do you think municipal officials trust the school committee?

Not at all — Great Extent

1 2 3 4 5

26. If there is a difference between (24) and (25) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

27. Aside from reactions to the issues involved in school committee collective bargaining with teacher representatives, what do you think is the distribution of power between your school committee and your teacher representatives?

a. teacher representatives have virtually all the power _____

b. teacher representatives have more power than the school committee _____

c. power is equally shared _____

d. the school committee has more power than teacher representatives _____

e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

28. How do you think your teacher representatives see this power distribution?

a. teacher representatives have vitually all the power _____

b. teacher representatives have more power than the school committee _____

c. power is equally shared _____

d. the school committee has more power than teacher representatives _____

e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

29. If there is a difference between (27) and (28) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

30. To what extent do you think teacher representatives trust the school committee?

Not at all — Great Extent

1 2 3 4 5

31. In collective bargaining between teacher representatives and the school committee, to what extent do you think the school committee trusts teacher representatives?

Not at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

32. If there is a difference between (30) and (31) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

33. In collective bargaining between teacher representatives and the school committee, how much of an influence does your personal persuasiveness, as superintendent, have on:

(teacher representatives)

None at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

(the school committee)

None at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

34. To what degree do you think personalities affected either negatively or positively, the outcomes of collective bargaining?

Not at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

35. Roughly estimate what percentage of your present staff was already in the school system when you were first appointed superintendent there?

_____
(Percentage)

36. How many members of the most recent teachers' bargaining team were appointed to the staff since you became superintendent?

_____

37. Briefly describe how you see the role you presently play as superintendent.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

38. Briefly describe the role you think a superintendent should be playing.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

COMMENTS:

PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED. WE SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS STUDY.

MACE STUDY ON SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

January 21, 1972

Dear Teacher,

The enclosed questionnaire is part of an effort to study some of the problems related to school governance in Massachusetts. We need your cooperation in getting the teachers' point of view on one problem under consideration.

The study is funded by the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education(MACE) and has on its advisory board representatives of a number of lay and professional organizations including the MFT and MTA. More information about the study is included in the introduction to the questionnaire.

We have endeavored to keep the questionnaire short enough to be answered in less than 45 minutes, and answerable from information ordinarily carried "in your head." All responses will be strictly confidential and seen and used only by the study staff. However, we do need identification, so that we can characterize results by region, size of community, and other variables. We plan to relate other data on districts, available from published sources, to some of the responses.

The envelope containing this letter, instructions and the questionnaire is self-addressed to us with prepaid postage. When you have completed the questionnaire, please mail it to us directly.

I hope you will find the questionnaire interesting, and that I can count on your cooperation.

Very sincerely,

Paul W. Cook, Jr.
Study Director

jm

Robert C. Wood, Study Advisor
Maurice A. Donahue, Study Advisor

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

1. SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME _____ TEL NO._____
COD NO._____

2. _____
Name of Respondent

2a. With which parent organization is your local teachers' organization affiliated:

_____AFT _____MTA

2b. Roughly what percentage of eligible staff members actually belong to your local organization?

_____

3. Your current position in the school system is:

_____

4. Length of service in school system: _____

5. Your current position in local teachers' organization is:

_____

6. Number of years closely connected with the bargaining process:

_____
Years

7. Number of years you have served at the table as a member of the bargaining team:

_____
Years

8. In what year did the school committee vote to recognize your organization as the official bargaining agent for the professional employees of your school district?

_____

9. Check the below listed bargaining units that are formally recognized by your school committee. Put an additional check beside those units that negotiate a separate contract.

Unit	Recognized	Contract
a. all school employees	___	___
b. all professional employees	___	___
c. classroom teachers	___	___
d. administrators	___	___
e. all auxiliary personnel	___	___
f. para-professionals	___	___
g. clerical	___	___
h. custodial	___	___
i. cafeteria	___	___
j. others, (specify)	___	___
_____	___	___

10. How representative of the professional staff is your current teachers' (Unit A, if appropriate) bargaining team? Indicate the number of men and women who represent each group, whichever is appropriate.

	Men	Women
Elementary school teachers	___	___
Middle/Jr. High teachers	___	___
Senior High teachers	___	___
Administrators	___	___

Are members of the team responsible to their grade and position groups or the whole unit?

_____Grade & Position Groups _____Whole Unit

INTRODUCTION--Teachers' Representative Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being sent to all school districts in Massachusetts with the intention that it be filled out by teacher representatives who were closely involved in the most recent round of negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement. If yours is one of the few communities in the state which do not yet have formal collective bargaining, then we are interested in the general communication process between your teachers and your school committee. Please make note of your special situation on the first page and try to fill out the questionnaire as best you can by substituting the word "communications" for "bargaining." Other questionnaires, comparable, but expanded to include issues other than teacher negotiations, are being sent to superintendents and school committeemen.

The purpose of these questionnaires is to obtain a profile of the extent and kinds of conflict situations that school committees in Massachusetts are finding themselves involved in at the present time, and the success that is being found in coping with them. By "conflict situations" we mean situations in which opposed interests or views are presented, and the requirement is for some settlement or agreement reconciling differences. The situations may run from the full spectrum from an easy and friendly meeting of minds to continuing and unresolved confrontation; we are not interested only in the latter, if for no other reason than that we want to find out what makes some issues resolvable and others not.

Clearly, all elements of such problems cannot be discovered by questionnaire, and the study as a whole will involve field work, interviews and other sources.

Since the (1) financial relationships worked out with city and town officials and (2) collective bargaining relationships with teachers are areas where most if not all districts have some problems of the kind we are interested in, the questionnaire focuses on these in greatest depth. We recognize and will make allowance for the fact that these are not the only areas of dispute and that in many communities other problems may be of greater current importance.

If, for some reason, you were not sufficiently involved in the most recent set of collective bargaining sessions in your school system, would you ask someone who was to complete the questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible in the self-addressed envelope we provided.

Thank you for your cooperation in participating in this study.

Instructions for Teachers' Representative Questionnaire

(1) CIRCLE OR CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AND FILL IN THE BLANKS AS INDICATED.

(2) IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER SEEMS TO APPLY, CIRCLE OR CHECK THE ONE THAT SEEMS TO BE MOST APPLICABLE.

(3) IF THE ANSWER IS NOT KNOWN OR THE QUESTION DOES NOT APPLY TO YOUR SITUATION, LEAVE BLANK.

Note: Throughout the questionnaire the term "municipal officials" is used to denote any agency or elected or appointed individual who by law or custom recommends acceptance or rejection of school budgets by the final decision-making body. In the most common case, this would be the Finance Committee of a town, and may include the Selectmen, Moderators, Town Managers or others.

11. How is your teachers' bargaining team chosen?

a. They volunteer. ____
b. They are appointed by _____ (specify) ____
c. They are elected by _____ (specify) ____

12. Have you successfully negotiated provisions for either:

	Y	N
a. Payroll deductions for dues		
b. Agency fee deductions (eligible non-members must pay bargaining costs equal to dues of members)		

13. In collective bargaining, did you have informal discussions with the superintendent or school committee members prior to presentation of proposals? Y N

14. In preparing for negotiations, were guidelines for an acceptable solution developed in consultation with individuals or groups who are not employed by your school committee? Y N

15. Was there any evidence of "inflated" or "deflated" proposals which were not based on the facts or data introduced to support them--

a. in the teachers' original demands?

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

b. in the school committee's counter proposal, if one was made?

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

16. How "unrealistic" would you say the school committee's position was at the time the two of you exchanged your first proposals in the most recent round of negotiations?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

17. Was there a change in your feeling about the realism of their proposals after the two of you talked for a while? Y N

18. At the end of negotiations, which party got most of the things he asked for (his demands)?

____We did. ____They did. ____We both did. ____Neither one of us did.

19. When there was a disagreement during negotiations over the accuracy or relevance of some data presented to support a proposal, how frequently was each of the following tactics chosen by your bargaining team? Rate on a 1-5 scale.

	Never				Always
a. dismiss the related proposal as unfounded	1	2	3	4	5
b. clarify the facts with the school committee and then consider a modified proposal	1	2	3	4	5
c. search for new data to support the original proposal	1	2	3	4	5
d. seek out and discuss intent behind proposal	1	2	3	4	5
e. Other (explain) _____	1	2	3	4	5

20. Did you and the school committee agree on what data and facts would be most relevant to your discussions and then cooperatively search for the most accurate information available?

	Y	N

21. When did this agreement and search occur?

a. Prior to the presentation of proposals? ____

b. Prior to discussion of terms of the bargaining agreement? ____

c. During negotiations? ____

22. Before or during negotiations, did your bargaining team or its representative discuss prospective contract terms or other issues related to bargaining with representatives of other towns?

	Y	N

23. Indicate whether you attach Considerable(C), Much(M), Little(L), or No(N) importance to the following types of data in collective bargaining by circling the appropriate response.

Data on other towns of the same size--	C	M	L	N
Data on towns thought to be similar in socio-economic characteristics-- . .	C	M	L	N
Data on neighboring towns--	C	M	L	N
What data?				
per pupil costs--	C	M	L	N
school tax rates--	C	M	L	N
total tax rates--	C	M	L	N
pupil/teacher ratios--	C	M	L	N
percent of the total community population in the public schools-- .	C	M	L	N
percent of school attending children in the public schools--	C	M	L	N
assumed measures of educational effectiveness such as standardized tests--	C	M	L	N
what other towns agreed on for economic factors--	C	M	L	N
what other towns agreed on for non-economic factors--	C	M	L	N
Cost-of-living changes--	C	M	L	N
Changes in prevailing wage rate in other industries--	C	M	L	N
Salaries offered to college graduates not entering teaching-- . . .	C	M	L	N
Salary increases teachers in other states are receiving--	C	M	L	N
Local unemployment; current economic conditions--	C	M	L	N
Other (specify)				
_____	C	M	L	N
_____				

24. At any time in the course of collective bargaining, how likely was the occurrence of any one of the following? Circle one response for each alternative. The responses are: (1) no likelihood, (2) little likelihood, (3) it could have happened, (4) we came close to it and (5) it did happen.

a.	a teachers' strike	1	2	3	4	5
b.	non-renewal of contracts of non-tenured teachers in the absence of an agreement	1	2	3	4	5
c.	disciplinary action against a teacher or teachers	1	2	3	4	5
d.	a public campaign for or against teachers' organizations	1	2	3	4	5
e.	actions involving high school students	1	2	3	4	5
f.	an increase in filing grievances related or not to the issues in dispute	1	2	3	4	5
g.	a recommendation that the budget would not be approved	1	2	3	4	5
h.	a lawsuit to restore the budget	1	2	3	4	5
i.	a threat of a taxpayers' suit challenging assessing practices in the city or town	1	2	3	4	5
j.	personal attacks or abuse	1	2	3	4	5
k.	increased absenteeism by teachers	1	2	3	4	5
l.	increased absenteeism by high school students	1	2	3	4	5
m.	any other tactics perceived to be coercive	1	2	3	4	5

25. In negotiations with the school committee, were formal negotiation sessions closed to members of the press, public and parent groups?

Never 1 2 3 4 Always 5

26. Were municipal officials (other than the school committee) present for collective bargaining negotiations?

Never 1 2 3 4 Always 5

27a. How often was the superintendent present at collective bargaining negotiations?

___Not at all ___0-25% ___26-50% ___51-75% ___76-100%

27b. Were school principals present at collective bargaining negotiations?

Never 1 2 3 4 Always 5

28. If principals were present, rank order the following reasons for their being there using (1) as the most common reason, (2) next most common and (3) least common.

a. only on their own initiative
b. as representatives of the bargaining unit ____
c. at the school committee's request ____

29. Have you ever reached an impasse in collective bargaining? Y N

29a. If yes, in the most recent impasse, did you utilize--
1) a mediator? Y N
2) a factfinder? Y N

29b. Did the mediator successfully resolve the impasse? Y N

29c. If a factfinder was used, did he successfully mediate the impasse prior to the conclusion of factfinding? Y N

29d. Did the factfinder submit formal recommendations in the form of a report? Y N

29e. Was the factfinder's report accepted without dispute by--
1) the teachers? Y N
2) the committee? Y N

30. When did you start negotiations for the bargaining agreement that covers this year?

Month ____ Year ____

31. When did you reach an agreement?

Month ____ Year ____

32. Estimate the time required for the most recent round of collective bargaining:

	1-10	10-20	20+
a. number of formal sessions			
b. total hours in all bargaining sessions	1-20	20-60	60+
c. total hours in preparation, meeting with advisors, bargaining team meetings by themselves or with other elements of the teachers' organization	1-15	16-25	25+

33. Was that time (the bargaining round referred to in Item 32, above) spent negotiating--

a. the district's first comprehensive contract? ____
b. a revision of an earlier comprehensive contract? ____
c. only specific items, such as salaries and extra duties? ____

34. If an outside negotiator was used by your bargaining team in collective bargaining, did he meet alone with the school committee's negotiator?

a. Negotiator not used ____
b. Never met alone ____
c. Rarely met alone ____
d. Often met alone ____
e. Very often met alone ____
f. Met alone all the time ____

35. If a negotiator was used, how often were recommendations by him overruled by the teachers' bargaining team?

a. Negotiator not used _____
b. Never overruled _____
c. Rarely overruled _____
d. Often overruled _____
e. Very often overruled _____
f. Overruled all the time _____

36. How much better is your teachers' organization handling collective bargaining now than it did three years ago?

a. No better, it's worse _____
b. The same _____
c. A little better _____
d. Quite a bit better _____
e. A great deal better _____

37. Taking account of turnover on the school committee, do you expect collective bargaining will be more effectively handled in the future?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

38. Taking account of the role played by the superintendent, do you expect collective bargaining will be more effectively handled in the future?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

39. Do you expect the turnover among local teacher organization leaders will adversely affect the way negotiations are handled in the future?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

40. How would you rate the negotiations process leading to collective bargaining agreements in terms of the following:

a. fairness to municipal interests

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Exceptional

b. fairness to the interests of the teachers' organization

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Exceptional

c. fairness to the interests of individual teachers

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Exceptional

d. fairness to school management interests

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Exceptional

e. efficiency in setting salaries and conditions of employment

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Exceptional

41. In your opinion, how much more cooperative in your school committee in its bargaining position on non-economic issues than on economic issues?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

42. How would you characterize the complete set of relationships between your teachers' organization and the school committee in collective bargaining? Rate each of the following alternatives on the basis of how frequently your relationship fits that description.

	Never				Always
a. friendly and cooperative?	1	2	3	4	5
b. impersonal and businesslike?	1	2	3	4	5
c. pressing for every advantage?	1	2	3	4	5
d. pressing for every advantage and personally antagonistic?	1	2	3	4	5

43. In terms of negotiating an agreement identical to that of other communities in this state, how similar is your situation to others?

a. on economic issues?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

b. on non-economic issues?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

44. Were teacher representatives present at discussions or hearings on the budget with municipal officials (other than school committee members)?

At none 1 2 3 4 5 At all

45. From your own experience, what do you think are some of the reasons that prevent teacher representatives and school committees from concluding negotiations prior to the date on which the budget has to be submitted for approval to municipal officials?

_____

_____

_____

46. Aside from reactions to the issues involved in school committee collective bargaining with teachers, what do you think is the distribution of power between your school committee and your teacher representatives?

a. teacher representatives have virtually all the power ____

b. teacher representatives have more power than the school committee ____

c. power is equally shared ____

d. the school committee has more power than the teachers ____

e. the school committee has virtually all the power ____

47. How do you think your school committee sees this power distribution?

a. teacher representatives have virtually all the power _____

b. teacher representatives have more power than the school committee _____

c. power is equally shared _____

d. the school committee has more power than the teachers _____

e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

48. If there is a difference between (46) and (47) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

49. In collective bargaining between your teacher representatives and the school committees, to what extent do you think the teacher representatives trust the school committee?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

50. To what extent do you think the school committee trusts the teacher representatives?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

51. If there is a difference between (49) and (50) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

52. In collective bargaining between your teacher representatives and the school committee, how much of an influence do you think your superintendent's personal persuasiveness has on:

(teacher representatives)

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

(the school committee)

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great extent

53. To what degree do you think personalities affected, either negatively or positively, the outcome of collective bargaining?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

54. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors influences your decision to accept or reject a proposal of the school committee in collective bargaining.

	Not At All				To A Great Extent
a. the nearness of the deadline for the conclusion of negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
b. your ability to "sell" the proposal to your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
c. the possibility of coercion:	1	2	3	4	5
d. the effect that such a decision will have on your future relationship with your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
e. the opinion of a "third party":	1	2	3	4	5
f. the change in the balance of power between you and the other party that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
g. your ability to "live with" such an agreement:	1	2	3	4	5
h. the length of time you have been negotiating:	1	2	3	4	5
i. the amount of money involved in the proposal:	1	2	3	4	5
j. additional duties and responsibilities that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
k. the possibility that the proposal would affect your legal rights:	1	2	3	4	5

55. Indicate on the following scale the direction and degree of your change in attitude toward the school committee since you became involved in collective bargaining. Circle one.

Extremely More Negative	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	No Change 0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	Extremely More Positive

56. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors affects your general attitude toward the school committee in collective bargaining.

	Not At All				To A Great Extent
a. the understanding they have of your true concerns:	1	2	3	4	5
b. the degree of cooperation they show in seeking out the best possible solution:	1	2	3	4	5

(Continued on following page.)

(Continued from previous page.)	Not At All				To A Great Extent
c. their willingness to consider alternatives or to compromise:	1	2	3	4	5
d. what they said about you publicly outside of negotiations in the past:	1	2	3	4	5
e. their views on the distribution of power between you:	1	2	3	4	5
f. the effects of previous negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
g. their attempts at force:	1	2	3	4	5
h. your sense of powerlessness:	1	2	3	4	5
i. your opinion of the entire negotiations process:	1	2	3	4	5
j. the pressures on you from your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
k. the presence of certain members on their bargaining team:	1	2	3	4	5
l. other factors (list, if you care to):					
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS:

AGAIN, PLEASE MAIL THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE BACK TO US DIRECTLY IN THE PRE-STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

YOUR COOPERATION WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS APPRECIATED AND WE HOPE THAT ITS TOTAL EFFECT WILL BE MEASURED BY THE IMPACT THAT THIS STUDY HAS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS.

MACE STUDY ON SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

January 21, 197-

Dear Sir or Madam,

The accompanying questionnaire set has been prepared as part of a project developed in cooperation with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and the Association of Superintendents of Schools (MASS) and funded by the Advisory Council on Education (MACE). The purpose is to try and get a comprehensive assessment of the kinds of stress that are afflicting school committees and of their capacity to cope with these problems. We are focusing on the conduct of relationships with outside groups, where new ideas or practices seem to come into conflict with traditional concepts of school committee authority.

Through the field work and interviews, we will have occasion to look at many such relationships. However, the questionnaire set focuses on two that all school committees in Massachusetts have--relationships with municipal officials in the budget setting process, and relationships with teachers in collective bargaining.

Thus, the questionnaire is in two parts--the first covering general information and the relationships with municipal officials; and the second covering collective bargaining. We ask that you fill out at least the first section. You may have another committee member complete the second. If your committee used a subcommittee for collective bargaining, please pass the collective bargaining portion of the questionnaire on to the head of that subcommittee. Of course, if you prefer, you can complete both parts yourself.

Although we have directed this questionnaire set to the Chairman of the school committee, or in cities where the Chairman is also the Mayor, to the Vice Chairman, both parts can be filled out by any member of the school committee. We have allowed for this because we are aware of the demands on your time and the likelihood that the response to this questionnaire set will be better if the task can be shared with other members of the committee.

Both sections require no research or data gathering by the respondent, and each part should be answerable in about 30 minutes. All responses are strictly confidential and will be seen only by the study staff. However, we do need identification to permit answers to be related to other data on districts, and to permit various types of statistical analysis.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Paul W. Cook, Jr.

jm

Robert C. Wood and Maurice A. Donahue--Study Consultants
Hugh Boyd and Margaret Jacques--MASC

INTRODUCTION--School Committee Questionnaire, Part I

This questionnaire set is being sent to all Massachusetts School Committees, with the intention of having the first part filled out by the Chairman, or in cities where the Chairman is also the Mayor, by the Vice Chairman, and the second part filled out by another member who is close to the teachers' negotiation process. A separate questionnaire is being sent to the Superintendent and to a representative of the teachers' organization in your school district.

Its purpose is to obtain a profile of the extent and kinds of conflict situations that school committees in Massachusetts are finding themselves involved in at the present time, and the success that is being found in coping with them. By "conflict situations" we mean situations in which opposed interests or views are presented, and the requirement is for some settlement or agreement reconciling differences. The situations may run from the full spectrum from an easy and friendly meeting of minds to continuing and unresolved confrontation; we are not interested only in the latter, if for no other reason than that we want to find out what makes some issues resolvable and others not.

Clearly, all elements of such problems cannot be discovered by questionnaire, and the study as a whole will involve field work, interviews and other sources.

Since the (1) financial relationships worked out with city and town officials and (2) collective bargaining relationships with teachers are areas where most if not all districts have some problems of the kind we are interested in, the questionnaire focuses on these in greatest depth. We recognize and will make allowance for the fact that these are not the only areas of dispute and that in many communities other problems may be of greater current importance.

Part II of this questionnaire deals with collective bargaining and can be given to another School Committee member to complete. We would prefer that both sections be completed by the same person. However, if for some reason, you have not actually attended the bargaining sessions with teacher representatives, or you prefer to share the task and the time involved, please ask another member of the committee to complete the bargaining section. If you choose this option, please insure that both sections are mailed back to us together in the envelope provided.

Instructions for School Committee Questionnaire

(1) CIRCLE OR CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AND FILL IN THE BLANKS AS INDICATED.

(2) IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER SEEMS TO APPLY, CIRCLE OR CHECK THE ONE THAT SEEMS TO BE MOST APPLICABLE.

(3) IF THE ANSWER IS NOT KNOWN OR THE QUESTION DOES NOT APPLY TO YOUR SITUATION, LEAVE BLANK.

Note: Throughout the questionnaire the term "municipal officials" is used to denote any agency or elected or appointed individual who by law or custom recommends acceptance or rejection of school budgets by the final decision-making body. In the most common case, this would be the Finance Committee of a town, and may include the Selectmen, Moderators, Town Managers or others. If your relationship with one sub-group of municipal officials (say the Selectmen) is significantly different from your relationship with another sub-group (say the Finance Committee), try to respond with an average of both sub-groups in mind and make a note of this special relationship in the margin.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE
(Part I)

YOUR NAME_____ TEL. NO._____
DOE NO._____

0. CHECK ONE: Chairman____ Vice Chairman____
Secretary___ Member____

1. In what year were you first elected? . . . . . _____

2a. Did someone run against you in your last election? Y N
2b. Did you actively campaign? . . . . . Y N

3a. Do you anticipate running for re-election? . . . . . Y N

3b. Please indicate why if you circled "No" in 3a. above.
_____

4. Were issues concerning the schools important in your most recent campaign, or was your election simply based on your qualifications for general public service?

Issues_____ General_____

5. Indicate briefly the nature of the issues.
_____
_____
_____

6. Did you regard your election as a mandate to try to change the school system in some specific direction?
Y N

7. If there was a mandate, indicate in a few words what its nature was.
_____
_____
_____

8. Would you like to hold some other elected office at some time in the future?
Y N

9. Have you ever run for some other elected office? Y N

10. How many (if any) members of the school committee do you believe are actively interested in holding some other political position in the future?
_____

11. Could you indicate how you feel about now the superintendent is carrying out these parts of his job? (Response categories: Excellent(E), Good(G), Fair(F), and Poor(P).) (CONFIDENTIAL)

(1) PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION: The selection of teachers and other school employees, salaries, assignments, promotions, and separations from service. . . . . E G F P

(2) FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION: Budgets, handling of funds, purchases, and accounting. . . . . E G F P

(3) SCHOOL PLANT MANAGEMENT: Site selection, relations with architects and contractors, furniture and equipment, repairs, and custodial services. E G F P

(4) INSTRUCTIONAL DIRECTION: Curriculum planning, methods of teaching, evaluation of activities, working with teachers, audio-visual materials, textbooks, and libraries. . . . . E G F P

(5) PUPIL SERVICES SUPPLEMENTARY TO INSTRUCTION: Transportation, health services, and school lunches. . . . . E G F P

(6) PUBLIC RELATIONS: Community contacts with organizations, newspapers, radio, reporting to the public. . . . . E G F P

(7) GENERAL PLANNING: for the school program as a whole. . . . . E G F P

12. Indicate your opinion of each of the following programs by circling (-2) if you strongly oppose it, (-1) if you mildly oppose it, (0) if you are indifferent to it, and (+1) if you mildly support it and (+2) if you strongly support it. Then, by circling MDE, or GC, indicate whether you or your superintendent, or your school committee personally or in writing communicated support or opposition for each policy to either the state Department of Education(MDE), which includes the Massachusetts Board of Education, or to the General Court(GC).

	Strongly Oppose	Mildly Oppose	Ind.	Mildly Sup.	Strongly Sup.	Communic. With:	
(1) Compulsory kindergarten	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(2) Hot lunch program	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(3) Racial imbalance program	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(4) Metropolitan districting to achieve racial balance	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(5) State-wide testing program	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(6) State aid results (Chap.70)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(7) Minimum salary law	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(8) Fiscal autonomy	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(9) Restriction on teachers' tenure	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(10) Voluntary collective bargaining	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(11) State-wide goals for education	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(12) Tenure for principals	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(13) Regional vocational high schools	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(14) Massachusetts D.E. Statement on Student Rights	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(15) Minimum staffing standards	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(16) Alternatives to local property tax for support of schools	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(17) Increased state aid for school construction	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC
(18) Other (please indicate)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	MDE	GC

13. Following these directions there is a list of problems and issues which some school districts face, as well as some blank spaces in which you can write additional problems and issues.

1. FIRST, be sure the list contains the four most important issues facing your district at this time by writing in additional issues as necessary.
2. THEN, in Column A rank order the four most important issues your district faces, including those issues you added to the list, by placing a 1 beside the most important, 2 beside the second most important, and so on through 4.

3. To complete Column B, consider how well equipped you and your local school committee are to develop solutions to the four problems. Then, rank order the four issues already identified as most important, indicating with a 1 the issue your district is best equipped to deal with or lead to a problem solution, with a 2 the issue your district is next best equipped to govern, and so on through 4. (Ignore the other issues.)

4. In Column C, for these same four issues, assign numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 to the degree of controversy surrounding the issue, as follows:

DO NOT RANK
1) Would indicate a heated public controversy.
2) Stands for a strong position with growing support.
3) Represents a problem with mild support on both sides.
4) Signifying a relatively quiet problem.

5. In Column D, for the same four issues considered most important (again, do not rank) assign numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 to indicate the degree of organization of those whom you would regard as "the opposition" as follows:

1) Highly organized, including individuals, small groups, continuing interest groups, plus direct involvement of elected officials.
2) Individuals and small groups, plus continuing interest groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, important business organizations, N.A.A.C.P., League of Women Voters, etc.
3) Individuals and small interest groups organized around this issue.
4) A few individuals only.

	(Col. A) Rank (1-4) Importance To Our District	(Col. B) Rank (1-4) Capability To Guide the Dev. of Solutions	(Col. C) Degree of Controversy(See Directions)	(Col. D) Degree of Organiz. of the Opposing Parties
(1)Adequacy of prysical plant				
(2)Operating budget and tax rate				
(3)Parochial school potential or actual closings				
(4)Youth behavior on and off premises				
(5)Collective bargaining with teachers				
(6)Educational and curriculum philosophy and policy				
(7)Educational results being achieved				
(8)Racial issues and minority issues				
(9)Comprehensive education and vocational education				
(10)Cost effective educational management				
(11)Public involvement				
(12)Student self-direction				
(13)				
(14)				
(15)				

The following questions are concerned with your committee's relationship with municipal officials in the development of the budget under which your district is presently operating.

14. Is the mayor a member of the school committee? . . Y N

15. Did informal discussions with municipal officials prior to presentation of the budget indicate what the probable issues in dispute would be?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

16. In developing the budget, were guidelines for an acceptable solution developed in consultation with municipal officials prior to completion of the budget?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

17. Did the budget submitted to municipal officials appear to be derived from, or substantially determined by, facts or data introduced with the budget?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

18. Did municipal officials indicate that they would cut the budget if they had the power to do so?

Y N

19. Describe your relationship with municipal officials in development and submission of the budget by indicating on a 1-5 scale how typical each of the following alternatives is of your relationship.

	Not at all				Great Extent
a. We develop the budget and do no more than required by law in presenting it to them.	1	2	3	4	5
b. We develop the budget and submit what our best judgment indicates, but we make a substantial effort to persuade them of the correctness of our decision.	1	2	3	4	5
c. We work closely with them or with public groups capable of influencing them from the beginning of development of the budget.	1	2	3	4	5

20. Are there other communities with which you frequently compare yourself in terms of financial data?

Y N

If yes, list the communities: _____

_____

21. Is there a conscious effort to keep your cost per pupil in a relatively fixed relationship with other communities' cost per pupil?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

22. Is there a conscious effort to keep your salary costs in relationship with other communities' salary costs?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

23. Is prospective state aid deducted from the anticipated school costs when the proposed budget is presented to the public?

Y N

24. Have municipal officials objected to this procedure?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

25. In the course of the budget approval process, how likely was the occurrence of any one of the following? Circle one response for each alternative. The responses are: (1) no likelihood, (2) little likelihood, (3) it could have happened, (4) we came close to it and (5) it did happen.

a. a public campaign in support of, or attacking, the school budget? 1 2 3 4 5

b. a recommendation that the budget not be approved? 1 2 3 4 5

c. a lawsuit to restore the budget? 1 2 3 4 5

d. a threat of a taxpayers' suit challenging assessing practices in the city or town? 1 2 3 4 5

e. personal attacks or abuse? 1 2 3 4 5

f. other tactics regarded as coercive? 1 2 3 4 5

g. a teachers' strike? 1 2 3 4 5

h. specific companies or individuals leaving the community? 1 2 3 4 5

26. Were members of the press, public or parent groups present at budget discussions with municipal officials?

At none 1 2 3 4 At all 5

27. Were teacher representatives present at discussions or hearings on the budget with town officials?

At none 1 2 3 4 At all 5

28. How many school committee members were usually present for budget discussions with municipal officials? _____

29. Estimate your time required for consideration of the budget:

	0-5	6-15	16-35	36+
a. hours in open school committee meetings.				
b. hours in your "homework"				
c. hours in open discussion with municipal officials.				
d. hours in executive session.				

30. When you prepare a budget prior to concluding negotiations with employee groups, are the anticipated costs of the collective bargaining agreement identifiable in the submitted budget?

a. Yes, in a contingency fund ____

b. Yes, in a number of line items ____

c. No, we diffuse anticipated costs throughout the budget ____

d. No, we anticipate submitting a supplementary budget ____

e. Does not apply because we conclude negotiations before completing the budget ____

31. How flexible is your school committee in adjusting the approved budget subsequent to the settlement of the bargaining package?

a. We do not accept an agreement that will exceed the budget ____

b. We absorb the costs of bargaining by adjusting the budget ____

c. We absorb what we can and also make a supplemental request ____

d. Most bargaining costs are put into a supplementary budget ____

e. Does not apply because we conclude negotiations before completing the budget ____

32. How much direction did your committee give the superintendent on the maximum allowable budget increase?

None 1 2 3 4 5 Great Deal

33. Did the school committee cut the superintendent's original budget proposal?

Y N

34. Did the municipal officials recommend (or urge timely acceptance of) the budget as submitted to it by the school committee?

a. No ____

b. Yes, after negotiated change ____

c. Yes, basically without change ____

d. Yes, because they worked closely with the school committee in the preparation of the budget ____

35. Are you confident that the school budget receives from municipal officials fair and impartial and informed treatment?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Always

16. How would you characterize the complete set of relationships between the school committee and all municipal officials in budget matters? (Rate each of the following alternatives on the basis of how frequently your relationship fits that description.)

	Never				Always
a. friendly and cooperative?	1	2	3	4	5
b. impersonal and businesslike?	1	2	3	4	5
c. pressing for every advantage?	1	2	3	4	5
d. personally antagonistic?	1	2	3	4	5

17. In the past three years, in large part, as a result of budget pressure, has there been--

a. an increase in average class size?	Y	N
b. a reduction or elimination of specific academic programs (list) _____ _____	Y	N
c. a reduction in other programs for students (list) _____ _____	Y	N
d. a reduction in materials and supplies, taking account of price changes	Y	N
e. other reductions (list) _____ _____	Y	N

18. In the past three years, have proposed programs been approved but not implemented because of budget pressure?

Y N

(list) _____ _____

19. Do you believe your school system could do a significantly better job with the money it has?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

40. If the state aid to education formula were revised so that the allocation to your community was increased by 25%--

a. what percent of that additional money would go to schools? _____%

b. what percent would go to other municipal services and/or tax relief? _____%

("a" and "b" above should total 100%)

c. of the money that went toward schools (a. above), what percent would you have applied to salaries? _____%
to programs? _____%

(the total should equal the percent you indicated in "a" above)

d) Of the money that went to other municipal services, what percent do you think would be applied to:

local tax relief _____%
general municipal serv. _____%

(the total should equal the percent you indicated in "b" above)

e) How confident are you of the accuracy of your estimates in "a" to "d" above?

No confidence 1 2 3 4 5 High confidence

41. What would be its immediate effect upon the quality of educational programs you now provide if substantially more revenue was suddenly available to your school district. (Rate on a 1-5 scale the probability of each of the following alternative effects occurring.)

	Not at all				Great Extent
a. None, the money would be used to reduce the school debt or to relieve the tax burden of the homeowner.	1	2	3	4	5
b. None, the money would be used to make our present programs more equally available to all students.	1	2	3	4	5
c. The money would make available new programs not currently available to any students.	1	2	3	4	5
d. The money would be used to improve the quality of programs now offered to all students.	1	2	3	4	5

42. In the past three years, how many times has your district attempted to secure approval from your city or town for a building program and associated debt issuance?

_____times

How many separate projects were involved? (For example, there may have been three submissions for one project, such as a new high school.)

_____

In the past three years, how many efforts to secure approval for buildings and debt have been approved?

_____

43. Aside from reactions to the issues involved in the budget approval process between the school committee and municipal officials, what do you think is the distribution of power between your school committee and your municipal officials?

a. municipal officials have virtually all the power ____
b. municipal officials have more power than the school committee ____
c. power is equally shared ____
d. the school committee has more power than municipal officials ____
e. the school committee has virtually all the power ____

44. How do you think your municipal officials see this power distribution?

a. municipal officials have virtually all the power _____

b. municipal officials have more power than the school committee _____

c. power is equally shared _____

d. the school committee has more power than municipal officials _____

e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

45. If there is a difference between (43) and (44) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

46. In the budget approval process between municipal officials and the school committee, to what extent do you think the school committee trusts municipal officials?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

47. To what extent do you think municipal officials trust the school committee?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

48. If there is a difference between (46) and (47) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

49. In the budget approval process between municipal officials and the school committee, how much of an influence do you think your superintendent's personal persuasiveness has on:

(municipal officials)

None at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

(the school committee)

None at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

50. To what degree do you think personalities affected, either negatively or positively, the outcomes of the budget approval process?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

51. Indicate on the following scale the direction and degree of your change in attitude toward municipal officials since you became involved in the budget approval process. (Circle one)

Extremely More Negative -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 No Change 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5 Extremely More Positive

52. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors influences your decision to accept or reject a proposal of the municipal officials in the budget approval process. (Check below if this entire item does not apply to your situation.)

_____We do not entertain proposals from municipal officials regarding the school committee's budget.

		Not At All				To A Great Extent
a.	the nearness of the deadline for the conclusion of negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
b.	your ability to "sell" the proposal to your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
c.	the possibility of coercion	1	2	3	4	5
d.	the effect that such a decision will have on your future relationship with your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
e.	the opinion of a "third party":	1	2	3	4	5
f.	the change in the balance of power between you and the municipal officials that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
g.	your ability to "live with" such an agreement:	1	2	3	4	5
h.	the length of time you have been negotiating:	1	2	3	4	5
i.	the amount of money involved in the proposal:	1	2	3	4	5
j.	additional duties and responsibilities that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
k.	the possibility that the proposal would affect your legal rights:	1	2	3	4	5

53. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors affects your general attitude toward municipal officials in the budget approval process.

		Not At All				To A Great Extent
a.	the understanding they have of your true concerns:	1	2	3	4	5
b.	the degree of cooperation they show in seeking out the best possible solution:	1	2	3	4	5
c.	their willingness to consider alternatives or to compromise:	1	2	3	4	5
d.	the thoroughness of their preparation for each negotiations session:	1	2	3	4	5

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)	Not At All				To A Great Extent
e. their views on the distribution of power between you:	1	2	3	4	5
f. the effects of previous negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
g. their attempts at force:	1	2	3	4	5
h. your sense of powerlessness:	1	2	3	4	5
i. your opinion of the entire negotiations process:	1	2	3	4	5
j. the pressures on you from your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
k. the presence of certain members on their bargaining team:	1	2	3	4	5
l. other factors (list, if you care to):					
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS:

IF ANOTHER MEMBER OF YOUR COMMITTEE HAS COMPLETED THE SECTION ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, WOULD YOU INSURE THAT IT IS RETURNED WITH THIS PART, OR SEPARATELY, TO:

DR. PAUL W. COOK, JR.
MACE STUDY DIRECTOR
MASS. INST. OF TECHNOLOGY
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THIS STUDY.

MACE STUDY ON SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

January 21, 1972

SCHOOL COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE
(Part II)

The following questions apply to your school committee's experience with the most recent collective bargaining activity, whether or not an agreement has been reached.

This section should be answered by a school committee member, preferably one who was close to the bargaining process with teacher representatives. It should not be answered by a negotiator because we are concerned here only with the views of school committee members. If no member of the school committee was actually present for the negotiations sessions with teacher representatives, or if your committee does not formally negotiate with teachers, this will be evident to the study staff from the responses provided. Please do not let that keep you from answering what questions you can. In this part, especially toward the end, there are a number of general questions on your reactions to the entire bargaining process which can be answered easily whether or not you have actually participated in bargaining sessions. Please do the best you can to answer all questions. You may make note of any special circumstances that may affect your responses.

YOUR NAME_____ TEL. NO._____
CODE NO._____

0. CHECK ONE: Chairman_____ Vice Chairman_____
Secretary_____ Member_____

(If the following statement applies, please so indicate.)

_____OUR SCHOOL COMMITTEE DOES NOT FORMALLY BARGAIN WITH THE TEACHERS BUT I WILL TRY TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE GENERAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS.

1. In collective bargaining, did you have informal discussions with members of the teachers' bargaining team prior to the presentation of proposals?

Y N

2. Who makes up the bargaining team that represents the school committee at all teacher negotiations sessions? (Check all the categories that apply and fill in the appropriate blanks.)

___a. _____School committee members? (Fill in how many.)
___b. Lawyer-negotiator?
___c. Non-lawyer negotiator?
___d. Superintendent
___e. Assistant superintendent, business manager, or personnel officer
___f. Other (specify) _____

3. How many years of experience in face-to-face bargaining with the teachers does the senior school committee member on your bargaining team have?

_____
Years

4. In preparing for negotiations, were guidelines for an acceptable solution developed in consultation with municipal officials, a municipal personnel committee, other school committees in your area or with any other group not administratively responsible to the school committee?

Y N

5. Was there any evidence of "inflated" or "deflated" proposals which were not based on the facts or data introduced to support them--

a. in the teachers' original demands

None at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

b. in the school committee's counter proposal, if one was made?

None at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

6. When there was a disagreement during teachers' negotiations over the accuracy or relevance of some data presented to support a proposal, how frequently was each of the following tactics chosen by your bargaining team or committee? Rate each on a 1-5 scale.

	Never				Always
a. dismiss the related proposal as unfounded	1	2	3	4	5
b. clarify the facts with the teachers and then consider a modified proposal	1	2	3	4	5
c. search for new data to support the original proposal	1	2	3	4	5
d. seek out and discuss intent behind proposal	1	2	3	4	5
e. Other (explain) _____	1	2	3	4	5

7. How "unrealistic" would you say the teachers' position was at the time the two of you exchanged your first proposals in the most recent round of negotiations?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

8. Was there a change in your feeling about the realism of their proposals after the two of you talked for a while?

Y N

9. At the end of negotiations, which party got most of the things he asked for (his demands)?

____We did. ____They did. ____We both did. ____Neither one of us did.

10. Did you and the teachers agree on what data and facts would be most relevant to your discussions and then cooperatively search for the most accurate information available?

Y N

11. When did this agreement and search occur?

a. prior to the presentation of proposals ____
b. prior to discussion of terms of the bargaining agreement ____
c. during negotiations ____
d. it never happened that way ____

12. Before or during negotiations, did your school committee or its representative discuss prospective contract terms or other issues related to bargaining with representatives of other towns?

	Y	N

13. Indicate whether your school committee, negotiations subcommittee, or negotiator attached Considerable(C), Much(M), Little(L), or No(N) importance to the following types of data in collective bargaining by circling the appropriate response.

Data on other towns of the same size--	C	M	L	N
Data on towns thought to be similar in socio-economic characteristics--	C	M	L	N
Data on neighboring towns--	C	M	L	N
What data?				
per pupil costs--	C	M	L	N
school tax rates--	C	M	L	N
total tax rates--	C	M	L	N
pupil/teacher ratios--	C	M	L	N
percent of the total community population in the public schools-- . . .	C	M	L	N
percent of school attending children in the public schools--	C	M	L	N
assumed measures of educational effectiveness, such as standardized tests--	C	M	L	N
what other towns agreed on for economic factors--	C	M	L	N
what other towns agreed on for non-economic factors--	C	M	L	N
Cost-of-living changes--	C	M	L	N
Changes in prevailing wage rate in other industries--	C	M	L	N
Salaries offered to college graduates not entering teaching--	C	M	L	N
Salary increases teachers in other states are receiving--	C	M	L	N
Local unemployment; current economic conditions--	C	M	L	N
Other (specify) _____	C	M	L	N

14. At any time in the course of collective bargaining, how likely was the occurrence of any one of the following? Circle one response for each alternative. The responses are: (1) no likelihood, (2) little likelihood, (3) it could have happened, (4) we came close to it and (5) it did happen.

a. a teachers' strike	1	2	3	4	5
b. non-renewal of contracts of non-tenured teachers in the absence of an agreement	1	2	3	4	5
c. disciplinary action against a teacher or teachers	1	2	3	4	5
d. an increase in filing grievances related or not to the issues in dispute	1	2	3	4	5

e. a public move to defeat or cut the budget 1 2 3 4 5

f. a lawsuit to restore the budget 1 2 3 4 5

g. a threat of a taxpayers' suit challenging assessing practices in the city or town 1 2 3 4 5

h. personal attacks or abuse 1 2 3 4 5

i. increased absenteeism by teachers 1 2 3 4 5

j. any other tactics perceived to be coercive 1 2 3 4 5

15a. Did the school principals unit bargain for their own salaries?

Y N

15b. Were school principals present at the teachers' collective bargaining negotiations?

Never 1 2 3 4 Always 5

15c. If principals were present for teachers' bargaining, rank order the following reasons for their being there using (1) as the most common reason, (2) next most common and (3) least common.

a. only on their own initiative _____

b. as representatives of the bargaining unit _____

c. at the school committee's request _____

16. If a professional negotiator was employed by your committee in collective bargaining, did he meet alone with the teachers' negotiator?

a. Negotiator not employed
b. Never met alone _____
c. Rarely met alone _____
d. Often met alone _____
e. Very often met alone _____
f. Met alone all the time _____

17. If a negotiator was employed how often were recommendations by him overruled by the school committee?

a. Negotiator not employed
b. Never overruled _____
c. Rarely overruled _____
d. Often overruled _____
e. Very often overruled _____
f. Overruled all the time _____

18. When did your district start negotiations for the bargaining agreement that covers this school year?

_____ Month _____ Year

19. When did you reach agreement?

_____ Month _____ Year

20. In what month does the final date for budget submission fall?

_____ (1-12)

21. If a bargaining settlement was reached subsequent to that final budget date, was the total cost less than, more than, or equal to the cost estimate implied in the budget? (Disregard effects of wage freeze.)

_____Less _____Equal _____More

(If you answered "More" to Question 21 above, complete Question 22. Otherwise, go right on to Question 23.)

22. If the cost of the settlement was greater than implied in the budget, did the committee anticipate--

a.	requesting a supplemental appropriation?	Y	N
b.	reducing teaching staff to hold salaries to budget?	Y	N
c.	making other adjustments within the approved budget?	Y	N
d.	Other (specify) _____	Y	N

23. Estimate the time that your school committee or negotiations subcommittee spent on the most recent round of collective bargaining?

		1-10	10-20	20+
a.	number of formal sessions			
b.	total hours in all bargaining sessions	1-20	20-40	40+
c.	total hours in preparation, meeting with negotiator, or subcommittee meeting with full committee	1-15	16-25	25+

24. Was that time (the bargaining round referred to in Item 23 above) spent negotiating--

a.	the district's first comprehensive contract?	Y	N
b.	a revision of an earlier comprehensive contract?	Y	N
c.	only specific items, such as salaries and extra duties?	Y	N

25. How much better is your school committee handling collective bargaining now than it did three years ago?

a.	No better, it's worse	_____
b.	Just the same	_____
c.	A bit better	_____
d.	Quite a bit better	_____
e.	A great deal better	_____

26. Taking account of turnover on the school committee, do you expect collective bargaining will be more effectively handled in the future?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

27. Taking account of the role played by the superintendent, do you expect collective bargaining will be more effectively handled in the future?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

28. How would you rate the negotiations process leading to collective bargaining agreements in terms of the following:

a. fairness to municipal interests

Not at all				Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

b. fairness to the interests of the teachers' organization

Not at all				Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

c. fairness to the interests of individual teachers

Not at all				Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

d. fairness to school management interests

Not at all				Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

e. efficiency in setting salaries and conditions of employment

Not at all				Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

29. In your opinion, by how much do teachers' representatives exceed their proper authority in their bargaining position on non-economic issues?

Not at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

30. How would you characterize the complete set of relationships between your committee and teacher representatives in collective bargaining? Rate each of the following alternatives on the basis of how frequently your relationship fits that description.

	Never				Always
a. friendly and cooperative?	1	2	3	4	5
b. impersonal and businesslike?	1	2	3	4	5
c. pressing for every advantage?	1	2	3	4	5
d. pressing for every advantage and personally antagonistic?	1	2	3	4	5

31. Do you believe teachers in your system--

a. are paid much too little
b. are paid too little _____
c. are paid the right amount _____
d. are overpaid _____
e. are grossly overpaid _____

32. In terms of negotiating an agreement identical to that of other communities in this state, how similar is your situation to others?

a. on economic issues?

Not at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

b. on non-economic issues?

Not at all				Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

40. To what degree do you think personalities affected, either negatively or positively, the outcomes of collective bargaining with the teachers?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 Great Extent 5

41. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors influences your decision to accept or reject a proposal of the teachers in collective bargaining.

	Not At All				To A Great Extent
a. the nearness of the deadline for the conclusion of negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
b. your ability to "sell" the proposal to your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
c. the possibility of coercion:	1	2	3	4	5
d. the effect that such a decision will have on your future relationship with your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
e. the opinion of a "third party":	1	2	3	4	5
f. the change in the balance of power between you and the teachers that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
g. your ability to "live with" such an agreement:	1	2	3	4	5
h. the length of time you have been negotiating:	1	2	3	4	5
i. the amount of money involved in the proposal:	1	2	3	4	5
j. additional duties and responsibilities that such a decision would cause:	1	2	3	4	5
k. the possibility that the proposal would affect your legal rights:	1	2	3	4	5

42. Indicate on the following scale the direction and degree of your change in attitude toward the teacher representatives since you became involved in collective bargaining. (Circle one)

					No Change					
Extremely More Negative	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	Extremely More Positive

43. Rate on a 1 to 5 scale how much each of the following factors affects your general attitude toward teacher representatives in collective bargaining.

	Not At All				To A Great Extent
a. the understanding they have of your true concerns:	1	2	3	4	5

(Continued on following page.)

33. Aside from reactions to the issues involved in school committee collective bargaining with teacher representatives, what do you think is the distribution of power between your school committee and your teacher representatives?

a. teachers have virtually all the power _____
b. teachers have more power than the school committee _____
c. power is equally shared _____
d. the school committee has more power than the teachers _____
e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

34. How do you think your teacher representatives see this power distribution?

a. teachers have virtually all the power _____
b. teachers have more power than the school committee _____
c. power is equally shared _____
d. the school committee has more power than the teachers _____
e. the school committee has virtually all the power _____

35. If there is a difference between (33) and (34) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

36. In collective bargaining between teacher representatives and the school committee, to what extent do you think the school committee trusts the teacher representatives?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

37. To what extent do you think the teacher representatives trust the school committee?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

38. If there is a difference between (36) and (37) above, to what do you attribute this difference?

_____

_____

39. In collective bargaining between teacher representatives and the school committee, how much of an influence do you think your superintendent's personal persuasiveness has on:

(teacher representatives)

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

(the school committee)

None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Great Extent

(Continued from previous page)

	Not At All				To A Great Extent
b. the degree of cooperation they show in seeking out the best possible solution:	1	2	3	4	5
c. their willingness to consider alternatives or to compromise:	1	2	3	4	5
d. what they said about you publicly outside of negotiations in the past:	1	2	3	4	5
e. their views on the distribution of power between you:	1	2	3	4	5
f. the effects of previous negotiations:	1	2	3	4	5
g. their attempts at force:	1	2	3	4	5
h. your sense of powerlessness:	1	2	3	4	5
i. your opinion of the entire negotiations process:	1	2	3	4	5
j. the pressures on you from your constituency:	1	2	3	4	5
k. the presence of certain members on their bargaining team:	1	2	3	4	5
l. other factors (list, if you care to):					
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS:

PLEASE RETURN THIS PART TO YOUR CHAIRMAN OR VICE-CHAIRMAN SO THAT IT CAN BE MAILED TOGETHER WITH PART I IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED TO:

DR. PAUL W. COOK, JR.
MACE STUDY DIRECTOR
MASS. INST. OF TECHNOLOGY
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YOUR COOPERATION WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS APPRECIATED AND WE HOPE THAT ITS TOTAL EFFECT WILL BE MEASURED BY THE IMPACT THAT THIS STUDY HAS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS.

APPENDIX B

FOOTNOTES AND CITATIONS

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